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The Week

A SURVEY of world affairs as 1927 opens reveals a clear advance over the situation a year ago. In western Europe the tension has been greatly relaxed by the entrance of Germany into the League and the coming into effect of the Locarno treaties. While the economic situation leaves much to be desired, it is now certain that the worst corner has been turned. In Russia the improvement has been particularly notable. It has been accompanied in 1926 by the victory in Russian political life of a group which is in favor of a conciliatory attitude toward the other great powers, and would put on the shelf for at least a long time to come the plans for fomenting a worldwide series of communist revolutions. Great Britain during this same period has come through a general strike and has seen the failure of the coal strike which was its original cause. The situation of the miners is so near to unendurable that the question must soon come up again; but in the meantime the country will have a breathing space for rebuilding her badly damaged industrial structure.

FRANCE has momentarily succeeded in halting the rise of the franc, and now has a breathing space to do what she can to avoid a renewed fall. Mussolini remains a constant threat to the peace of Europe; but at least he is no more dangerous now than he was a year ago and the situation in the Balkans is on the whole no more unstable. In the Far East the remarkable success of the Cantonese armies has entirely changed the situation. The Peking government, recognized by the powers, has disappeared. Chang Tso-lin and Wu Pei-fu are growing weaker. Great Britain has made the notable decision, in which the other powers are likely to concur, to abandon the use of force, recognize Canton, and seek by fair dealing to regain some of the good will of the Chinese, which has heretofore been so recklessly squandered at the point of the bayonet.

THE League of Nations has come successfully through its worst crisis, in connection with the entrance of Germany. Its attempt to grapple with the problem of disarmament has ended in virtual failure; but this was perhaps no more than should have been expected in view of the general situation. Undoubtedly it will return to the effort again. The armament race is once more in progress as completely as before 1921, the semi-obsolete battleship being the only instrumentality restricted by the Washington agreement. Most of the chief powers are now building cruisers, destroyers, submarines and airplanes with might and main. The very fact of this armament race, in which President Coolidge now threatens to join, gives some faint hope for success in another armament conference. The prospect of bankruptcy will sometimes persuade a nation to be reasonable when nothing else will.

IN regard to China Great Britain has at last seen the handwriting on the wall. Having failed to win the support of Japan and the United States for a policy of using force she has now decided to try

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conciliation. The official memorandum made public on Christmas Day practically promises to recognize the Canton government if it continues to succeed. Great Britain now approves the levying of the so-called "Washington surtaxes" by China—a decision which is reasonable since the Cantonese are levying whatever taxes they please and no one can stop them. The British also declare that they have wanted to adopt their present attitude ever since last May, but refrained from doing so in order to continue the unanimity of the great powers. That the English should be the leaders in a movement of pacification is turning the tables with a vengeance. It is a characteristic example of opportunist British policy, a fact which, however, does not make it any the less desirable. We heartily welcome it, and only wish that Great Britain had seen the light a year, or a decade, ago. We wish even more heartily that America had taken the initiative in inaugurating the new policy, as it had every reason to do, in view of its historic attitude and in view of its comparatively light commitments. If the other powers now join, as there is reason to believe they will, there is more hope for China than at any time since the Opium War. The fact that the bayonets of the Cantonese armies have compelled the moral reformation which we are witnessing does not destroy its value.

HOW city congestion grows is well illustrated by what is happening in New York. The metropolis, the subway systems of which are crowded with passengers almost to the limit of human endurance, is spending many millions of dollars on a new tunnel running the length of the island. Now comes the news that a skyscraper 110 stories in height is to be erected on Forty-second Street, at one of the stations on the new line. This building will be 1,208 feet in height, the tallest structure in the world. It will be 506 feet taller than the 60-story Woolworth building, and 300 feet taller than the new 85-story Book Tower in Detroit; and it will have an estimated office population of 30,000. We leave it to the experts to say whether such a building is technically possible, or could be made to pay if it were built. Assuming (which we doubt) that it can and will be constructed, we are interested to consider that its 30,000 workers mean 60,000 rides each day on transit facilities of some sort, and visitors to the offices mean at least 60,000 more. It is probable that a majority of these 120,000 riders will use the new subway. It will not take many skyscrapers to crowd this line as badly as its predecessors; and under New York's laissez-faire policy it is certain that they will be built—if not 110-story ones, then larger numbers of others not so high. Already a new real estate development is springing up along the line of the not-yet-completed tube. In the centre of the city it consists of office buildings, and further out there are apartment houses. It is a safe prediction that the new subway will not relieve congestion. On the contrary, new subways and new buildings are the Siamese twins which produce it. How many years will it take for the municipal authorities to discover this great truth and bend their efforts along entirely different lines?

THE weakest point in the machinery of the League of Nations is the mandate system. Originally it was established to accord with the new respectability which the advent of the League was supposed to bring into the relationship between the great powers and the "backward peoples"; but its practical workings have differed little from the older form of colonial holdings. The case of the Syrian mandate, held by France, is the most notorious illustration of this. The efforts of the Syrians to bring their case before the world were thwarted by the policy of permitting complaints from the subject people to come to the League's attention only through the mandatory power—which is about like the army rule that a private can only complain of injustice by a lieutenant through asking the lieutenant himself to speak to the captain about it. The injustice of this has at last become so apparent that the Mandates Commission has itself proposed that in future representatives of the inhabitants of the mandated territory should be allowed to appear in person and state their grievances.

TO this suggestion the reply of the British government has just been published. It rejects the suggestion in terms of coldest disapproval. It regards the existing machinery as entirely adequate. "The view of his Majesty's government," it adds, "is that there are the gravest objections to the grant of any form of audience by an advisory Commission of the League to petitioners who are either themselves inhabitants of a territory administered by his Majesty's government under mandate or are petitioning on behalf of inhabitants of such territories. . . . It has never been found necessary to grant audiences to petitioners either for the purpose of considering their petitions or for the purpose of elucidating the matters with which any petition deals. It would appear that in any case in which after examination of a written petition the Mandates Commission finds itself unable to make a definite recommendation to the Council, its proper course would be to request the mandatory power concerned to furnish or to obtain from the petitioners such further information as it requires." In other words, let the League ask France to find out from the Syrians whether she has been acting with unexampled cruelty and injustice in their country, and if so, report to that effect. We submit that this policy is unworthy of the British government, or any honest government. It is a continuation of the "damned nigger" theory of dealing with the inhabitants of the mandated territory; and the longer it is continued, the more troublesome it will be.

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OPPOSITION to the President's appointment of Cyrus E. Woods of Pennsylvania to the Interstate Commerce Commission is justified on so many grounds that it is difficult to believe the appointment will be confirmed. Item one, Mr. Woods was appointed on the basis of a political deal by which Senator Reed of Pennsylvania withdrew his opposition to the appointment of Thomas F. Woodlock in return for a promise that the next time a vacancy occurred Mr. Coolidge would name a Pennsylvanian. There is no reason whatever why a supposedly expert and impartial commission should be constituted on the scheme of parceling out territorial favors. Item two, the vacancy arises through expiration of the term of Frederic I. Cox of New Jersey, an able and experienced Commissioner, who ought in the public interest to be reappointed. Item three, Mr. Woods was formerly counsel for the Pittsburgh Coal Company, which is interested in a dispute about rates with the West Virginia and Kentucky regions, in which the change of a single vote on the Commission can alter a former decision unfavorable to Pennsylvania. Item four, Mr. Woods was campaign manager for Senator Pepper in the recent scandalous Pennsylvania primary, handling the $1,800,000 which was scattered so liberally. Items five to five million, there is no evidence that Mr. Woods brings to the high office the technical knowledge, the statesmanship or the judicial temper which should be the only qualifications for it. Stuffing commissions will, if this sort of thing keeps up, constitute an even blacker mark against the existing Republican régime than stuffing ballot boxes.

Nicaragua Occupied

IT IS an extraordinary spectacle which today presents itself in Nicaragua. That country now has two governments. That of the Conservatives, headed by Adolfo Diaz, has been recognized by the United States. That of the Liberals, of which Juan Bautista Sacasa is President, is recognized by Mexico. The former holds the capital of the country, Managua. The Liberals set up their government at Puerto Cabezas and until Christmas Day were functioning at that port. Then they received a Christmas present from Uncle Sam. Rear Admiral Latimer of the U. S. Navy announced that Puerto Cabezas would be made a neutral zone for the protection of American citizens and property. He gave the Sacasa government until the following afternoon at four o'clock to get out or disarm. He also, according to unofficial reports from Puerto Cabezas, ordered American firms there to pay taxes only to the Diaz régime, which according to our State Department is the one and only authentic government of Nicaragua.

Admiral Latimer's action is explained as being in no sense a violation of neutrality, but merely the usual measures taken to protect Americans in the zone of hostilities. This explanation, we submit to our readers, is the flimsiest of falsehoods. There is in the first place no evidence that American property or life has been imperiled by any action of the Liberals. It is stated on the contrary that the American residents of Puerto Cabezas are in favor of the Sacasa government and have no apprehension of danger; and this statement has not been denied. The further action of Admiral Latimer in creating several "neutral zones" along the eastern coastline in which the United States will permit no fighting is obviously an action tending to favor the Conservatives. The evidence is clear, in our judgment, that the United States is explicitly and effectively intervening on behalf of Diaz. To know why this action is being taken, is it necessary to recall a few facts.

In the first place, Diaz has been a notorious tool of the United States for many years. In 1912, we forced his election after the United States Minister to Nicaragua had cabled to the Secretary of State that the Assembly would confirm him

> according to any one of the plans which the [American State] Department may indicate.

Subsequently, President Diaz used American Marines to crush an attempt at revolution, and for the next thirteen years our troops remained in Nicaragua "to preserve order." They left in August, 1925, and within a few months thereafter the President, at that time Solorzano, had been overthrown by General Emilio Chamorro. The United States could not recognize Chamorro because of the Hughes doctrine that we will have nothing to do with Latin-American governments which have come into power by force. To get around this difficulty, Chamorro resigned and his friend Diaz was "elected" President on November 11 last by a hand-picked congress. Our recognition was immediately extended.

Sacasa had been Vice-President under Solorzano, the last genuine President of Nicaragua. He therefore has at least as much right to claim the constitutional succession as has Diaz. Yet no sooner did his movement begin to gain headway than a barrage of vilification was laid down against him in the United States and in part by our government officials. It was charged that he was a tool of Mexico and that Mexico's purpose was to spread Bolshevism in Central America. Both these statements have been denied by Messrs. Calles and Sacasa, though the second is so palpably false and absurd that it hardly needs to be refuted. This same accusation, it will be remembered, was the one which Assistant Secretary of State R. E. Olds, former law partner of Secretary Kellogg, tried to broadcast throughout the press on the eve of receiving Mexico's final note in the oil and land law dispute.

Furthermore it will be remembered that the

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United States, even before Diaz's election, and while Chamorro still occupied the Presidential chair, took sides to the extent of forbidding shipments of arms to the Liberals who were seeking to overthrow his government. Finally, only a few days before Admiral Latimer's latest move, President Diaz gave the show away. In a public statement he demanded that the United States stand by him, in terms which strongly suggested the existence of an agreement to that effect, an agreement which the State Department had momentarily found it inconvenient to carry out. That his appeal was not in vain, subsequent events have revealed.

If it be asked why the United States is so keenly interested in Nicaraguan affairs, the answer is three-fold.

First, there are the heavy American investments in lumber, fruit and other enterprises.

Second, there are the loans of American bankers, such as the $9,000,000 Brown-Seligman loan of 1920, and the $300,000 loan to the Diaz government announced just eight days after his succession to the Presidency. A $6,000,000 additional loan is now under consideration.

Third, there is the desirability of keeping open a second canal route. By utilizing the Nicaraguan lakes, a canal could be constructed with a minimum of digging, and this plan was long and seriously considered as a preferable alternative to the Panama line. It has been under consideration, in fact, since 1849 and undoubtedly still plays an important part in the calculations of the American government. It was the cause, incidentally, of one of the most shameful episodes in the history of our relations with Latin America. At our instigation, the Central American republics had set up a Court of Justice for peaceable settlement of international disputes. Then followed the Bryan-Chamorro treaty giving us special rights in the Gulf of Fonseca, where Nicaragua's wonderful Pacific harbor is situated. Honduras and Salvador, also interested in the gulf, protested against this treaty. The case was referred to the Court, which ruled against the United States. Thereupon we refused to abide by the Court's decision. This blow to its prestige proved fatal, and it ceased to function.

It is obvious that the present action of the State Department cannot fail to do the gravest harm. It will turn the people of Nicaragua against us and against our puppet Diaz, making it necessary, if his government survives at all, to bolster it with bayonets. It will result in an increased tension in our already strained relations with Mexico. It will be regarded throughout South America with growing apprehension as more evidence that the Yankees intend to dominate the Caribbean regardless of the wishes of the peoples involved. To Europe it will appear to justify the doctrine that the United States is just as imperialistic as any other power, whenever her real or imaginary interests seem to make it desirable.

President Coolidge has in the past shown a high degree of common sense and practical justice in curbing the ambitions of professional jingoes in the State, War and Navy Departments. We take it for granted that he has not been responsible for the late developments in Nicaraguan affairs and we hope that the unwisdom of the present course is now so plain that he will see the desirability of putting an end to it.

Bed-Time War Stories

A FEW weeks ago there appeared the first issue of a magazine which is going to print stories about war, the Great War, the Spanish war, or just war, and nothing else. Are we to expect gruesome, bloody, bitter stories, and acid, unforgettable tales by the young Bierces and Cranes of today? Hardly. For this magazine is not going to be another True Story magazine. Its prospectus explains everything:

> We firmly believe that good, wholesome war stories are both needed and wanted today. . . . [We shall publish] ONLY THE RIGHT KIND OF STORIES. . . . Glorifying war is very far from our intention. Our viewpoint is a harmless one, reminiscent. Bloodshed, the actual sorrows and horrors of war, will in no way be played up in this magazine. There will be nothing unpleasant, no propaganda of any kind, nothing that might arouse resentment, bitter thoughts, or set the mind aflme [sic]. We want to assure the wives, mothers and sweethearts of America that they can pick up this magazine with no fear of having their hearts wrung, their fears aroused. Let us take our treatment of the Big War as an example. . . . Fiction cannot ignore the greatest adventure in a man's life. But there were things in the Great Experience that the men themselves want to forget. We, too, shall forget them. . . .

"We, too, shall forget them. . . ." There is a ring of effort in this phrase, as if forgetting were not going to be altogether easy. It is, we wish to assure the editors of this magazine, quite easy. Quite as easy as remembering things, such as appointments and addresses, only in reverse gear. There exist excellent correspondence courses at the end of reasonable application to which it is possible to say to Mr. Addison Sims, in all truthfulness: "Why, Mr. Sims, I haven't seen you since that wholesome, harmless little vacation we had together in Europe in 1917-1918. I recall exactly the vin-blink, and the girls, and that crazy sergeant, and the exercise in the open air. What do you say to another good, wholesome trip?"

Thanks to this course, we began to forget all the unpleasantness long ago, and have thrown right out of our mind, and into some steel filing cabinets, a lot of unreal, bitter nonsense. We advise no one to look into those files unless he is quite cured, for he will discover silly records and statistics,

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of no use to anyone, about millions of men sitting opposite each other in dirty, lousy ditches for four years, about deaths, decapitations, gangrene, insanity, fire, explosions, hunger, black crepe, vermin, dried blood, and other figments of an unhealthy imagination. And an untimely calculation to the effect that if all the people who died as a result of the Great, Big War were to start marching now, quickly, single file, day and night, past the windows of the Reminiscent Club, they would still be marching past on the Fourth of July. And a more recent calculation to the effect that the net advantage to mankind of the great Forgettable was exactly plus-or-minus zero.

No, all this must definitely be forgotten. There's no money in it. The wives, mothers and sweethearts of America will fork up a dime each in exchange for a heart-wringing only upon special occasions, and this is not one of them. Their men, recent graduates of a glorious adventure, will pay a good price for fictional continuation of the glory, so long as it does not contain more than one-half of 1 percent of the dirty truth. The children of both, brought up as the majority of children have been before them, to thrill at the sound of a band, the sight of a regiment, the tale of a battle, will be encouraged to read good healthy war stories, so that when their turn comes to experience the real stuff, they won't be surprised. Or if by some queer chance they should find their war not as represented, the survivors among them can copy their fathers, and buy a magazine which will help them, in their turn, to forget, and then later on their children—but far be it from us to pursue any morbid train of thought. Let us forget such a future.

Let us forget all about men for a moment, and remember what has been going on recently among the animals. An interesting and adventurous mutual extermination broke out in their midst some twelve years ago, and the plains were excitingly strewn with carcasses, of no particular use to any of our furred and feathered friends except the vultures, buzzards, crows, jackals and hyænas. Eventually, however, these pets and nature herself had reduced this unmentionable material to an enormous expanse of nice, clean white skeletons, shining in the morning sun. The animals began collecting these purified bones, they began to hang them up in their dens along with the old school banner, they began to "reminisce," they began to exchange naïve, charming recollections and to like to read and write about them. Which seeing, a new species, known respectively as the syrup buzzards, the happy hyænas, the lollypop vultures and the chocolate-coated crows, said "Aha!" to themselves and circularized their fellow creatures as follows: "We are firmly convinced that what the animal kingdom needs today is good, wholesome extermination stories. We do not seek to glorify extermination, but we shall print nothing unpleasant about it, if you know what we mean. Nothing about extermination that can wring the heart of the most sensitive mare, cow or queen bee will we allow. There were a number of things in the Great Extermination which every decent animal wants to forget. We, too, shall forget them."

"What sort of stuff," inquired the owl (who as a good, wholesome pacifist had not resisted the evil of the animal draft), "what sort of stuff are you going to print? I should like to contribute. I have forgotten an awful lot." The promoters of the new venture sent him this scenario: "Once upon a time there was a young bird who sailed away to France on a transport with a lot of other young birds. All the way over they sang songs and played charades and visited each others' staterooms. The young bird stayed in France more than a year, touring the château country. There was beaucoup girls, and beaucoup vin and beaucoup A. W. O. L. When he came back, his sweetheart asked, 'Where's that other leg you used to have, dearie?' But the young bird had seen so many châteaux he couldn't remember. And so they lived happily ever after on a disability allowance of thirty thousand dollars a month."

Which sent the owl happily off to bed.

Let not all this be misconstrued as an appeal for funds to start a magazine which will print true fiction about war, for it would not be read, much less bought. All we mean to say is that if the editors of the publication with the wholesome prospectus care to realize their "sincere hope that America never again will be engaged in a war," they could not do better than make the first number of their magazine the last.

Gilding the Cage for the Filipinos

THE report of the Honorable Carmi Thompson on the Philippines is on the whole a better document than we had reason to expect. It is whispered in Washington that the surprisingly conciliatory tone toward the Filipinos and the strictures on General Wood and his staff are not unconnected with the possibility that the Honorable Carmi may himself be sent out as the successor to the present Governor, and with the natural desirability of beginning by seeking the good will of the native population. We do not know whether these whispers have any foundation in fact; but we do know that a number of the recommendations made in the document are obviously wise, and we hope they will be put into effect. We believe Colonel Thompson is correct when he says that control of the Islands should be taken away from the War Department and put into the hands of civilian administrators. The same course should be followed with Porto Rico, which is also under the War Department, and

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with Guam and Samoa, administered by the Navy. His criticism of the military men who act as Governor Wood's staff is, we believe, sound. We agree with him in his opposition to the Bacon bill which would separate the Mohammedan Moro islands from those of the Christian Filipinos. He is right in urging that the American Congress should not pass laws invalidating the present Philippine statute limiting the size of plantations; but that if for the sake of rubber new legislation is desirable permitting a larger holding in the hands of one company than is now possible—and Colonel Thompson believes this change should be made—the action should be taken by the Island Legislature and by no one else. We feel he is also right in saying that if the taxes on Philippine tobacco sold in the United States are no longer to be turned over to the Island Legislature, they should not in future be handed to the American Governor General, to be disposed of as he sees fit, but should be earmarked for specific purposes and included by Congress in the Philippine appropriations.

It was of course to be taken for granted that Colonel Thompson would oppose granting independence at the present time. To the collection of vague phrases on this subject with which our history is cluttered may now be added his "independence when the Islands are sufficiently developed to maintain an independent government." He points out some of the difficulties which militate against setting the Islands free at once: the fact that eight main dialects are spoken, and that the majority of the members of each group are unable to communicate with anyone outside their own district; the ferocious animosity between the Moros and the Filipinos; the belief of the former that they have the solemn pledge of the United States that they will be protected from rule by the latter; the lack of a press or any other means of creating a general public opinion (the Island government might try radio broadcasting, as Haiti and Mexico are doing in similar circumstances); the present economic plight of the Philippines, with business virtually at a standstill, labor emigrating to Hawaii, and badly needed capital available only from foreign sources.

His thinking is far from realistic when he discusses the probable future of the Philippines under an independent régime. He points out that the present revenues of the government from taxation are only $44,000,000 a year, and argues that this sum would not support an army and navy. But the Philippines, if set free, would be far better off in every way without any army or navy. No force they could possibly muster could give them protection against one of the great powers; and they are in no danger from anyone else. We should like to know what he means when he says that setting the Islands free might result in "a serious shift" in the status quo in the Orient. Does this vague threat imply that Japan, England, France or the Netherlands would be likely to seize the archipelago the moment we relinquished our control? If so, is it not obvious that the United States could prevent any such development in the simplest way by a preliminary arrangement with these powers? Which of them would find the Philippines valuable enough to be worth a war with America? Certainly not Japan, seeking an outlet for her surplus population, for the Japanese are as ill-fitted for life in the tropics as are the inhabitants of Connecticut.

Colonel Thompson makes much of the difficulties which would ensue were the Islands liberated and free trade with the United States cut off. But these two events are not inevitable accompaniments of one another. Free trade is just as much to America's advantage as to that of the Philippines and might well be continued no matter what the political relationship. Even if it were to be suspended, the logical and obvious procedure would be to do so by gradual process of slowly increased tariffs over a period of years, giving the Islands time enough to adjust to the altered conditions.

In short, while there are certainly grave difficulties in the way of independence for the Philippines, most of these obstacles could be cleared away, or greatly ameliorated, granted the existence of a real will to do so. Much of Colonel Thompson's reasoning is valid only for those who want to keep the territory and are seeking for excuses. He overlooks, for example, the fact that as things now are, every year which passes binds the Islands more closely to the United States. More than three-quarters of all their trade is now with us, and the proportion is steadily increasing. His proposals for extending the Federal Reserve System to the Philippines, and for creating Federal Land Banks there, are excellent, if considered in a vacuum, but their net effect would be to tie the Islands more closely to the United States than ever, and make it still easier for successive American administrations to postpone freedom to the ever more distant future.

The only practicable alternative to all this is some such plan as that recently outlined by W. Morgan Shuster. Let the United States agree to give the Islands their independence at a fixed date some years in the future—Mr. Shuster suggests 1948—provided that at a plebiscite held not many years before that time the inhabitants signify their desire that this be done. Then let them have an increasing degree of autonomy from year to year in the meantime, and let the final economic arrangement with the United States, whatever it may be, come into effect gradually over a long period. This proposal, in our judgment, meets most of the important difficulties brought up by Colonel Thompson. There are grave objections to it; there are grave objections to any plan; but the Shuster scheme combines practicability with ultimately redeeming our pledge to the Filipinos; and we are aware of no other scheme brought forward by anybody which does as much.

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The Supreme Court Boosts Public Ownership

UNLESS some clarity is reached soon as to the means of ascertaining the "value" of public utilities upon which a "fair return" is to be allowed, the case for public ownership and operation will be greatly strengthened. When the public builds a utility on borrowed money, it has to pay interest only on the actual funds invested. But when the utility is privately owned, the return may have to be reckoned on a sum indefinitely larger than the cost—or perhaps indefinitely less. These reflections are prompted by the recent decision of the Supreme Court in McCardle vs. Indianapolis Water Company.

Justice Butler's opinion for the majority in this case, taken at its face value, would require the customers of the water company to pay to the investors not merely interest and dividends on the capital which the company did in fact have to attract in order to finance its construction and equipment, but returns on the hypothetical amount of capital which *would* have to be attracted were the plant to be built at the present time instead of when it *was* built, plus 9.5 percent thereof for "going value." Moreover, in estimating how much capital *would* have to be attracted, Justice Butler insisted that the price conditions of the time justified the assumption that the entire hypothetical reproduction of the plant would take place at present "spot" prices, rather than at the average prices of the preceding ten years, which had been used by the commission. It was chiefly on this last point that Justices Brandeis and Stone dissented.

If regulation were required to follow the lines indicated by Justice Butler, the prices paid by the customers would have little relation to the amounts needed to attract capital. This conclusion must be qualified, however, by the fact that much of what he said was dictum. His actual decision, that the "value" of the property was not less than $19,000,000, could have been reached without giving full effect either to the spot reproduction cost or to the 9.5 percent going value; for the spot reproduction cost estimated by the commission's own engineer was over $19,000,000 with nothing for going value; and the ten-year average reproduction not much less. It was because the conclusion might have been reached without the reasoning, that there is significance in the fact that Justice Holmes "concurred in the result."

A consistent reliance upon the principle of reproduction cost, bad though it is, is no worse than the prevailing confusion of legal doctrine. Though the opinion is largely dictum, still it is to be feared that it will cause many commissions to base their valuations on high reproduction cost figures plus generous allowances for going value, in an effort to avoid reversal by the Supreme Court. But it is not clear that in the next case the Court will insist on following the Indianapolis dicta in either of these particulars. It must be remembered that the Court always purports to be finding a fact called "value," in the ascertainment of which it "considers" reproduction cost, actual cost and "other relevant items." If it means exchange value, as much of its reasoning would lead one to expect, we may be sure that it is not going to estimate it accurately in all cases. For exchange value depends upon the net earnings, and to permit net earnings in turn to be based on exchange value would be to prevent any changes in rates at all. If the Court therefore is going to try to base rates on exchange value, but still to permit some changes in rates, all we can predict is that the "value" found in each future case may or may not be the true exchange value. How far or in which direction it may deviate therefrom in each case we cannot foretell, for the Court will not admit that it deviates at all. If, on the other hand, the value which the Court purports to find is not exchange value, we have been given no clue for predicting the proportions in which the various ingredients will be mixed in the concoction of each decision. In fact, the Court has frequently assured us that "the ascertainment is not a matter of formulas" at all. On a single day, for instance, in June, 1923, it sustained a valuation of the Georgia Railway and Power Company which gave little or no weight to reproduction cost, while it rejected a valuation of the Bluefield Company which, as far as appears in the report, gave a great deal of weight to it. (The cases will be found in 262 U. S., pages 625 and 679 respectively.) No matter what basis of valuation a commission may use, the validity of it will depend on the judicial whim at the moment of the decision.

The result is that commissions, instead of giving their attention to the real problem of making rates as low as is compatible with the attraction of capital and the encouragement of efficiency with fairness to existing investors, have to handle the unreal problem of flattering the fantastic and quite unpredictable notions of six gentlemen whose training has been in other fields; for the three Justices who give some evidence of seeing through the hocus pocus are in the minority.

Can anything be done to escape this incubus under a system of private ownership and public regulation? Were it not for the Court's interference a commission might deal with the problem by placing some more or less arbitrary valuation on existing properties and announcing that in the future these figures would be increased only by the amount of actual new investment made therein; and that investments in new companies would be taken at actual cost. The arbitrary valuation for the existing properties, at a figure which might exceed actual cost, would be a compromise in favor of those who had bought securities at a price based on the expectation that more than original cost would be

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allowed. The fairness of the compromise would not depend on an expensive process of ascertaining reproduction cost. The actual cost basis for new investments should suffice to attract such capital as really is attracted into the corporate treasury and as is used for construction and equipment. If the rate of return is sufficient to induce the investor to part with the money which a plant actually costs, it is sufficient to induce him to perform the only function which he is called upon to perform, namely, to contribute that much money once and for all. There is evidence that the Interstate Commerce Commission has in mind some such plan as this in keeping its initial valuations of railroads up to date. It seems also to be true that the regulating authority in Massachusetts has from the start based returns on security issues which represent the actual cost to the investors and that investors have counted on this policy in making their investments. Some latitude is allowed in the rate of return as a reward for efficiency. We have never heard of any difficulty in attracting capital into utilities in Massachusetts.

Any such policy, however, on the part of commissions has a sword of Damocles hanging over its head. We cannot predict what the Supreme Court will do to it. It might indeed sustain it, for basing rates on the actual cost of investments made after the announcement of this valuation policy is a very different thing from any of the "actual cost" valuations which the Court's dicta have opposed; in those cases the actual cost basis was applied retroactively, to the detriment of many who had purchased securities at prices based on other expectations. Even though the Court might see this vital distinction, there would be no certainty that the announced policy would be followed by the commission in all future cases; and certainty is one of the prime virtues of the plan. The best way to effectuate it is through legislation. Such legislation was urged by Dr. John Bauer as the outcome of his careful study of the problem in his book, Effective Regulation of Public Utilities. There is room for dispute as to the basis for the compromise valuation of the existing properties. But the statute could be so framed that possible judicial disapproval of this particular feature would not invalidate the "actual cost" clause for future investments. It is difficult to see on what ground a non-retroactive provision like this could be held unconstitutional, even by judges of the type that concurred in the Indianapolis Water case.

One other alternative may be open to the legislatures. It is no secret that many utilities are apprehensive of the weight given by courts to reproduction cost. Much of their equipment has been installed at post-war prices; should price levels fall, reproduction cost might prove disastrous to them. Companies in this situation might voluntarily accept new franchises by the terms of which they would forego any earnings in excess of a fair return on an agreed initial valuation, which could be increased thereafter only by the amounts of such actual new investments as may be made from the pockets of the security holders, while the state would forego the right to reduce rates to less than a fair return on the same agreed basis. In an article in the National Municipal Review for October, Mr. Philip P. Wells, Deputy Attorney General of Pennsylvania, sees a wide scope for holding down returns, by contract, to the actual cost basis. Until companies agreed to these terms, he would have the states refuse to grant any of the privileges that companies may need in the future. Among such privileges are permissions to new companies to engage in the utility business at all, permissions to old companies to extend their operations or to amend their corporate charters, rights to the use of state owned streams or other property, and the exercise of the power of eminent domain. Mr. Wells suggests also that existing corporate charters might be revoked, under the reserved powers contained in them, and the companies forced to carry on business as partnerships, unless they will agree to the terms of the franchises he suggests. The constitutionality of these agreements would seem to be beyond dispute; they are modeled on the Federal Water Power act.

Legislation is needed at once to put into effect either policy—the one advocated by Bauer to stabilize the rate-base by legislative fiat, or the one advocated by Wells to stabilize it by bringing pressure on the companies to accept the proposed franchises. The use of reproduction cost must be eliminated, first, because it has no relation either to the real requirements for attracting capital or to fairness toward those who have bought stock above original cost in the past, and secondly, because the process of ascertaining it is extremely burdensome and expensive to all concerned. While the public interest is alive to the electric power question, Governor Smith has a rare opportunity to secure legislation along one of these two lines, which will make New York a model for the entire nation. It is only under such legislation that private ownership of public utilities will have even a fighting chance to demonstrate its value to the public in the long run.

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The Practical Man and His World

HERE is Richards, a practical man, living in the United States of America as the year of our Lord 1927 begins. He is of course a business man, a Republican, a church member, an officer of the Chamber of Commerce, a power in his community. He has his feet on the ground. On his portly figure the eyes of nine-tenths of every graduating class of young men are fixed. That there is no nonsense about him is the universal verdict of his fellows.

Well, let us see. What is nonsense in the premises? A lack of conformity to a given standard. In this case, lack of conformity to the mores, the culture complex, of a given social group. Obviously Richards's 1927 behavior, if carried on in Athens in 500 B. C. would be nonsensical—one doubts if even Socrates could have made anything of it; or in Peru in 300 A. D.; or in Central Africa today. He would go crashing through countless tabus, exhausting the patience and courtesy of even the most tolerant of hosts, horrifying the commonalty beyond repair, and ultimately be fortunate if he escaped not only ostracism, but the sword of the executioner. Only by unlearning most of his American practicality could he survive. And what would *we* do with a practical Babylonian, a practical Tartar, a practical Knight of the Round Table, or even a practical Commissar from Moscow, in New York today? He would have to choose between Sing Sing and Bellevue, and that rapidly before the mob winded his practicality.

The standards of nonsense shift according to the mores of the group. None is more valiant in defense of the going folkways than Richards, and on the basis of this definition he is indeed a practical man.

The definition is a limited one, however. Is it possible to dig deeper, and perhaps find a standard which is not subject to such fluctuation, and so bring Richards into focus from a more enduring viewpoint? We can try.

What have anthropology, biology, psychology and history to teach us about coming to terms with one's environment; the optimum conditions of living the good life? Have these sciences yet given any clue to the kind of environment in which both the body and the mind may best function? Do they know what constitutes a sound body, and a well functioning mind? There is no final word—even though the Greeks were working on the problem 2,500 years ago—but there is something to be learned.

The yardsticks for measuring the soundness of the body grow increasingly more delicate, and the methods for achieving and maintaining health, increasingly explicit. The laws of diet, exercise, fresh air, sanitation, exposure to the sun, clothing freedom, are at least formulated to the point of meeting the pragmatic test. If we choose to take them, and keep out of the hands of quacks, we find that by and large they work. And as we look down the aisles of history and of anthropology we find that they have worked, without conscious formulation, in the case of other peoples which have been fortunate enough to take advantage of them. South Sea Islanders knew at once diet and heliotherapy, and their bodies were the despair of the early missionaries. Happily tin cans, white sugar, black pants and firewater have gone far to remedy that despair.

Yardsticks for the mind are not so easy to come by, and perhaps the dawning science of psychology has nothing better to offer as yet than "to see life steadily and see it whole." Bertrand Russell bids us educate for four characteristics which, he says, seem jointly to form the basis of an ideal character: vitality, courage, sensitiveness, intelligence. However obscure the process—with its millions of stimuli and response reactions—whereby a sound and balanced mind may be attained, most of us recognize the finished product when we see it. And given the language, we should have recognized it in Cambodia or Yucatan, before the jungles closed in upon those shining cities.

Finally, it would seem to be a matter of common knowledge that a cultural environment where cruelty, exploitation and ignorance are at a minimum, and tolerance, kindliness, beauty, art and science at a maximum, is the sanest, and the least nonsensical which the imagination can devise. A few communities have come near for a time to this standard. Many have come near to it in certain respects. The first great age of Peru, prior to the dynasty which Pizarro conquered, hovered on the edge of all these virtues, and was certainly, in terms of human welfare, one of the most practical communities which the world has ever seen.

Suppose that we take, experimentally if you please, these rough, but surely less ephemeral definitions of body, mind and community, as standards for measuring Richards's behavior. Needless to say no such individual as the Richards here described ever existed on land or sea. He is but the symbol for a group, no single member of which ever runs quite true to type. Suppose we note the condition of his body, the content and scope of his mind, the degree of kindliness, beauty, order, well-being, in the community which surrounds him. Remember that all his force as a practical man—indeed it is the test of his practicality—is thrown on the side of preserving that environment essentially in status quo. Changes, he will tell you, are the province of long-haired reformers and unpractical visionaries. For better or for worse, he has accepted the world

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in which he does business, as the best of all possible worlds.

First, as to Richards personally.

His body does not make sense. He is too fat, too short-winded, his blood-pressure is too high. His sexual life is out of rhythm measured against that of many peoples where family life is even more highly regarded. He combines artificial abstinence with an occasional debilitating orgy. His vision is poor, his skin is pasty and his arteries are hardening before their time. He negatives the good effect of his golf with too many highballs and cigars. He negatives the spacious leisure of his home and of his office, with a nervous pressure which hounds him as remorselessly as does his shadow. He changes from subway local to express to save two minutes which he does not need; he seriously damages his efficiency by trying to answer the telephone and dictate a careful memorandum simultaneously; and if an elevator goes by him, he is out of sorts for the balance of the day. His diet is, hygienically speaking, absurd.

In short, a pretty unpractical body.

His mind is highly specialized. In manipulating a game played with pieces of paper. The game name for the paper is money. It is held that were it not for this game, the wheels of production would stop, and those of us who did not starve to death would presumably retreat to the life of the Cro-Magnon. In some of the most civilized communities which the world has ever seen, bankers were classed rather below than above street sweepers. Media of exchange are of course important, but the present complicated rules governing such media are without significance, except in the negative sense: namely, that their stupidity is so sublime that it is impossible to keep purchasing power on a level with productive capacity. We cannot buy back what we have made. Our industrial plant is equipped to furnish double the normal, artificially strangulated demand. Messrs. Foster and Catchings are devoting a very able library to that stupidity.

This specialization in a dubious game has stultified Richards's imagination, his sympathy, his tolerance, his manual dexterity, his appreciation of beauty; nearly all his creative expression. Intellectually and emotionally he leads a twilight life. When his biological mechanism revolts from such abnormality, the only relief known to him is alcohol, loose women, or a highly restricted form of behavior, conducted in his class and station according to meticulous rules, known as travel or vacation. Explorers he holds only less fantastic than reformers. Pure science, he says, may be all very well, but what does it get you in cash? To let himself go with an idea or with a wilderness would be slightly obscene. To dance—as three thousand generations of mankind have danced—to strip himself naked in the sun, to write a poem, or sing a song, or shout because the sky is blue, or get down on his knees before the majesty of a great river, or gather a harvest, or lay one stone upon another—is an unthinkable and outlandish practice to this practical man. He has indeed lost the habit of relaxation altogether—as his body only too plainly shows.

Nor has he ever stopped to ask himself the ultimate value to the community of certain products which his money stimulates. He is financially interested in a woollen mill which turns out shoddy garments in great quantities for the poor; in a lumber mill which imperfectly seasons its timber to increase turnover; in a housing development which is an eyesore and a fire trap; in a toilet preparation which makes fabulous sales by scaring people to death. All these holdings rate well on the stock exchange and are good practical money makers, but a Medici would have paused between murders to throw them out of Florence, as an unconscionable waste of a craftsman's time.

Meanwhile his other habits as governed by the ruling tabus of his class, exhibit a certain modicum of nonsense. His clothes are uncomfortable, ill adapted to climatic changes, and unspeakably ugly as contrasted with other ages, or with, say, Japan at the present time. His social position puts a handicap on the formation of genuine friendships, even as his paper game forces spurious friendships with bores who may favorably affect his business. (Perhaps all history holds nothing so dreary as the friendships of blackslappers.) Being a "father to his children" tends to cut off any sincere friendship with them. As a practical father his nexus is a cash one.

We have to credit him indeed with a certain joy in his sense of power, and a certain go-getting vigor. He is no beaten bookkeeper. But his power comes not so much by virtue of any creative leadership in the arts, sciences or public administration, as by the sheer command over workers, servants, women and underlings, which his pieces of paper grant him. True, he receives a margin of joy and vigor which is undoubtedly good for his vital processes, but he receives it at the expense of the joy and vigor of those over whom he sits. Thus were built the pyramids, but not so Mont Saint Michel and Chartres. And it is fair to ask, which is the more practical building?

His mind is active, vigorous, but so highly specialized as to be totally incapable of seeing life steadily and seeing it whole. Great areas of commanding human importance—beauty, leisure, scientific curiosity, the arts, the sense of state—register not at all. And so a reasonably unpractical mind, in terms of getting the most which life has to offer.

Turning now to the culture, the social environment, in which he finds himself. How do the rest of his group react to this culture? What is their behavior so far as it is a matter of common ob-

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servation? His group, comprising the more or less uniform culture of urban life in the northeastern section of the arbitrary political area known as the United States, is composed of course of many subgroups. We may note off-hand, his fellow business men—practical fellows all, factory workers, tradespeople, household servants, housewives at various economic levels, policemen, burglars, artists—a list too long to attempt to tabulate. To note their total behavior would fill a library. We can but look at a few samples.

Here is a very considerable group making women's clothes. Each day they leave cramped, ugly and uncomfortable houses in great numbers, and sit sewing and machine tending in crowded, ugly, badly ventilated, and uncomfortable shops. They are pumped back and forth from barracks to shops in an underground pipe, of which the less said the better. The speed of the pumping, however, is universally conceded to be admirable. Quite suddenly they cease coming to the shops at all; for twenty-four weeks in the year, on the average, they have nothing to do, and no pieces of paper with which to play the game. Quite suddenly again they rush into the shops and work furiously far into the night. With women wearing clothes the year around, this is unaccountable, nay nonsensical behavior. Yet the practical men who run the shops say there is nothing else to be done. Seasonal peaks are dictated by fashion, but fashions are dictated by the practical business men. Hoist with their own petard. From the expressions on the faces of the workers both while in their shops and during their strange periods of idleness, it is plain to see that they are not happy. Yet curiously enough, the sensitiveness of many of them to art, beauty and the wider reaches of intelligence, is markedly superior to that of Mr. Richards and his friends. They haunt the cheaper seats at theatres, operas, symphony concerts; they crowd the art museums; they attend an unbelievable number of lectures. Were it not for them, philosophy, political theory and the arts generally would languish in America.

But over across the river in Jersey, there are even more workers who are equally convulsive and unhappy in their working habits, and who never touch the skirts of beauty or of learning the year around. Grime and ugliness and discomfort, with an occasional escape into drunkenness, is their daily fare for as long as they shall live.

Here are clerks, hundreds of thousands of them, hunched over ledgers, solemnly recording the sane and the insane aspects of Mr. Richards's game. They will write you a voucher for No. 1 winter wheat, or for a case of pills warranted to cure cancer; for a flyer in Southern Pacific, or for elegant town sites in Florida which are still under water. Spread on the pages of their journals, life, with its colors, its angles, its fineness and its terror, is at last standardized and brought to heel. Dollars and cents and mills; dollars and cents and mills; row on row, column after column; post, check, turn the folio, carry forward. If these fat books are not the Nirvana of absurdity, the antithesis of all the biological implications of man, then history has nothing to teach us. And the indignity of tending them bows down the souls of all their slaves. A beaten race, grasping in their despair at any straw—even correspondence courses which undertake to develop the personality. Henry Ford, among his other achievements, has dispensed with the bulk of his detailed bookkeeping. He is a specialist, and a rare one, in discovering business absurdities.

Here are advertising men, skilled in the science of forcing people to buy what they neither need, nor initially desire. The successful creation of new desires marks the summit of their professional achievements, and the more fantastic the desire, the more signal the honor. But advertising men are mostly too intelligent to accept unreservedly the high character of their services to the community. Their common sense is at odds with their daily bread, in a remorseless and unending warfare. Nothing worse for a balanced and happy life can well be imagined. In advertising men, and in their brothers in journalism, one touches, in rare moments of confession, the depths of cynicism and despair.

Here are artists—painters, sculptors, poets, novelists, composers, dramatists. A handful of them adhere to the things which they want to express, and after years of neglect and suffering, break through and command the world's attention; ten times as many never break through, and perish miserably or become book agents; while the majority have to abandon what they desire in favor of what will pay. No people is more belligerent in its defense of art than America, but the test of art, like the test of everything else, is: Does it pay? This was not the test in Athens, nor in Karnak, in Florence or Granada. Above all, it was not the test in Mont Saint Michel. America raids the art of bygone cultures as industriously as a terrier raids a rabbit warren, but save for the beginning of a literature, it has no art of its own, and its artists are either lost in the wilderness, or hired men. One suspects they are not happy, or doing a tithe of the sound work which lies within them.

If the above cases are atypical, the reader is invited to take any other group in the community about him, and analyze it from the same standpoint of the good life, as disclosed in the records not of Utopia, but of anthropology and history. He may find exceptions—perhaps the engineers are an exception; they seem to be reaching for something in the fine realities of concrete and steel—but the exceptions, one suspects, will be rare.

Noting, however imperfectly, the day by day behavior of Mr. Richards and his fellow citizens, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that the culture

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in which they find themselves is mostly without beauty, dignity or leisure; that the spirit of craftsmanship is almost dead; that both art and pure science (Mr. Hoover has been lately much concerned over the plight of pure science) lead a precarious existence; that sensations are largely received second hand—through the medium of the movies, the radio, the ball game, the ticker; that what might be called the normal biological mechanism is thwarted at a hundred turns, particularly in the planless canyons of great cities; that bodies are nothing to boast about, and minds, as they take the standardized pattern of the clerk, the realtor, the Rotary Club, the super-salesman, the professional gold-digger, the professional philanthropist, the professional uplifter—are even worse.

Briefly, a nonsensical environment. The more so because there is plenty of air, plenty of land, plenty of natural resources, plenty of technical invention, and, if the behaviorists are to be believed and past history is any guide, plenty of potential talent for utilizing and appreciating all these things. The true morons in the population, according to Dorsey, will not aggregate but a fraction of 1 percent. Mr. Mencken's appalling 90 percent may be superficially true enough, but it is acquired, not innate.

Mr. Richards, when I left college, I knew you for a practical man in a practical world. There was not a trace of nonsense about you. I asked for nothing better than to dare to follow where you led. And now, alas—through God knows what deflections from the straight path of duty, and the canons of success—having glimpsed beauty, and become conscious of what the body might be, and the mind might create and enjoy; having learned something of recorded history, of anthropology, of psychology, and of biology, and thus shifted my standards—my whole scale of values—to a homo sapiens at once more natural and more civilized, I suspect that you are one of evolution's failures in adaption. That seldom, in the one hundred thousand years of human history, have men come to more unpractical terms with their environment than have you, and that you are—and I am, too, as a member of your group and culture—most often a pathetic and futile figure.

Reeking with nonsense.

STUART CHASE.

The Pragmatic Acquiescence

THERE are myths and myths. Some are inspiriting; some are benumbing. Nature myths, at least in their first form, inspire because they are spontaneous responses of imagination to the scene that confronts it. Myths of literary criticism and historic interpretation are deadening. They do not enliven; they force subject-matter into ready-made patterns and thus dull sensitivity of perception. Such myths grow up in interpretations of past philosophies and always tend to overlay and conceal the realities of past reflection. They flourish in those literary versions by which the ideas of philosophers reach the public—for philosophers themselves are usually too much preoccupied with the technique, the professional rules, of their calling to have a public—except one another. Even such new movements as pragmatism and instrumentalism already have their accretion of myths which stand in place of the ideas themselves. Probably the unfortunate names themselves invite the creation and encourage the spread of these myths. The names account alike for some of the vogue of the doctrines and for some of the condemnation they receive.

One reading of the myth is embodied in the words which form the caption of what I am writing. They are borrowed from Lewis Mumford's The Golden Day; they sum up his essential criticism. "William James," he says, "gave this attitude of compromise and acquiescence a name: he called it pragmatism." Not content with this epithet, he headlines the idea of acquiescence; "the pragmatism that followed it was a paralysis." And again, "pragmatism was a blessed anæsthetic." What is denoted by "this attitude"? And in what did James acquiesce? The America of his own time, according to Mr. Mumford, the America of the Gilded Age that followed the Civil War. More concerned with making clear his pattern than he is with William James he goes as far as to say, "James was only warming over again in philosophy the hash of everyday experience in the Gilded Age." And this of William James, the arch-heretic of his day, the intellectual nonconformist, the constant protester against everything institutionalized in action and belief, the valiant fighter for causes which if not lost were unpopular and conventionally ignored! Such are the exigencies and dangers of a myth. If one were to apply Mr. Mumford's method to his own treatment, one might regard him as the acquiescent prophet of the Slogan Age of the 1920's.

For some reason, Mr. Mumford is fairer to me than he is to William James. But to bring me into line with his formula he has to attribute to me ideas of democracy and of "adjustment" which I not only have never held, but against which I have consistently, if vainly, taught and written. As evidence of a willing surrender on my part to industrial utilitarianism, he cites the following passage from my writings: "Fine art, consciously undertaken as such, is peculiarly instrumental in quality. It is a device in experimentation carried on for the sake of education. It exists for the sake of

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a specialized use, use being a training of new modes of perception," etc. The reader of the passage would inevitably infer what Mr. Mumford intends him to infer, that the passage represents my view of fine art, namely, that it is merely instrumental in character. But the entire chapter from which it is extracted is a statement that all art which is really fine exhibits experience when it attains completion or a "final," consummatory character, and, while it is urged that such art is also contributory, that to which it is held to be auxiliary is "renewal of spirit," not, it would seem, a base end, and certainly not a utilitarian one. The passage cited is directed against those views of fine art which treat it as an experience apart and for the few, an esoteric experience, instead of as a perfecting of the potentialities of any and all experience. This reference is implied in the quoted phrase "consciously undertaken as such"; it is explicitly stated in words which immediately precede what is cited, namely "seclusive æstheticians," the point being that fine art conceived in *their* sense is "instrumental," so that while all value is not denied to it, its value consists in opening "new objects to be observed and enjoyed." The next sentence after those which Mr. Mumford quotes, reads as follows: "This is a genuine service, but only an age of combined confusion and conceit will arrogate to works that perform this special utility the exclusive name of fine art." My literary style must indeed be "fuzzy and formless," as Mr. Mumford calls it, to have led him to assign to me a definition of fine art which I assert indicates combined confusion and conceit.

William James, however, hardly needs defense, certainly not against shaping him to a pattern which inverts his whole spirit and thought, and I do not think that a few more misconceptions of my own ideas are of such importance as to justify writing the present article. What has been said is introductory to an issue which is of genuine significance. What is the relation of criticism to the social life criticized? What, more particularly, is the relation of philosophy to its social medium and generation? I doubt if any competent student of the history of thought would say that there has existed any philosophy which amounted to anything which was merely a formulated acquiescence in the immediately predominating traits of its day. Such things need no formulation, not even an apologetics; they dominate and that is enough for them. Yet there is probably also no historic philosophy which is not in some measure a reflection, an idealization, a justification of some of the tendencies of its own age. Yet what makes it a work of reflection and criticism is that the elements and values selected are set in opposition to other factors, and those perhaps the ones most in evidence, the most clamorous, the most insistent: which is to say that all serious thinking combines in some proportion and perspective the actual and the possible, where actuality supplies contact and solidity while possibility furnishes the ideal upon which criticism rests and from which creative effort springs. The question whether the possibility appealed to is a possibility of the actual, or is externally imported and applied, is crucial.

There is a sense, then, in which pragmatic philosophy is a report of actual social life; in the same sense it is true of any philosophy that is not a private and quickly forgotten intellectual excrescence. Not that philosophers set out to frame such reports. They are usually too much preoccupied with the special traditions within which their work is done to permit the assumption of any such task. They are concerned with doing the best they can with problems and issues which come to them from the conflict of their professional traditions, which, therefore, are specialized and technical, and through which they see the affairs of the contemporary scene only indirectly and, alas, darkly. Nevertheless being human they may retain enough humanity to be, subconsciously at least, sensitive to the non-technical, non-professional, tendencies and issues of their own civilizations, and to find in the peculiar characteristics of this civilization subjects for inquiry and analysis. In any case, it is as necessary as it is legitimate that their methods and results should, in their leading features, be translated out of their proper technical context and set in a freer and more public landscape. The product of the dislocation may surprise no one more than the author of the technical doctrines. But without it the ulterior and significant meaning of the doctrines is neither liberated nor tested. The office of the literary and social critic in dealing with the broader human relationship of specialized philosophical thinking is, accordingly, to be cherished. But the office is a difficult one to perform, more difficult to do well than that of technical philosophizing itself, just as any truly liberal human work is harder to achieve than is a technical task. Preconceptions, fixed patterns, too urgent desire to point a moral, are almost fatal. A pattern is implied in such critical interpretation, but it must be tridimensional and flowing, not linear and tight.

What, then, is to be said of pragmatism and of instrumentalism when they are viewed as reflective reports of the American scene? More specifically, admitting a certain connection between the thought of James and the pioneer phase of American life and between instrumentalism and our industrialism, how is that connection to be understood? Mr. Mumford recognizes that the reflection by James of pioneer life is genuine and significant as far as it goes. But, he says, a "valuable philosophy must take into account a greater range of experience than the dominating ones of a single generation." Doubtless: nevertheless the dominating tendencies of two or three centuries may reveal to a genial mind something of vast significance for all generations. Their very exaggeration may disclose something hitherto concealed, while the lack of that something may

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have introduced such distortion and thinness into the earlier intellectual picture that its disclosure operates as a transformation. Mr. Mumford says that James lacked a Welt-Anschauung. No sentence he could have uttered affords such a measure of his competency to state the relation which the thought of James bore to pioneerdom. The idea of a universe which is not all closed and settled, which is still in some respects indeterminate and in the making, which is adventurous and which implicates all who share in it, whether by acting or believing, in its own perils, may appear to Mr. Mumford a commonplace, and not to be reckoned as a Welt-Anschauung. But one who has not studied James patiently enough to learn how this idea is wrought into his treatment of all special topics, from the will to believe to his pluralism, from his radical empiricism to his moral and religious ideas, has not got far in knowledge of James. That the controlling Welt-Anschauung does not appear in formal and pompous logical parade in discussion of special topics may not make the task of the would-be critic easy. But the style shows how genuinely and spontaneously the leading idea pervades his thinking. No other mode of literary presentation could have been so faithful to the central thought.

Perhaps one has to be old enough to recall, with some fullness of impression, the intellectual atmosphere in which James's work was carried on to realize that James brought with him not only a Welt-Anschauung but a revolutionary one. His professional contemporaries did not even trouble to criticize his philosophy; it was enough to laugh. Was it not self-evidently a more or less delightful whimsy of a tyro in philosophy who happened at the same time to be temperamentally something of a genius in psychology? Not until he gathered together the ideas which long previously he had profusely scattered in his other writings under the rather unfortunate title of pragmatism did he receive serious attention. And long after "pragmatism" in any sense save as an application of his Welt-Anschauung shall have passed into a not unhappy oblivion, the fundamental idea of an open universe in which uncertainty, choice, hypotheses, novelties and possibilities are naturalized will remain associated with the name of James; the more he is studied in his historic setting the more original and daring will the idea appear. And if perchance the future historian associates the generation of the idea with a pioneer America—in which James had no personal share—that historian may be trusted to see that such an idea is removed as far as pole from pole from the temper of an age whose occupation is acquisition, whose concern is with security, and whose creed is that the established economic régime is peculiarly "natural" and hence immutable in principle.

But America is now industrial and technological, not pioneering. Perhaps the later form of pragmatism called instrumentalism is the anodyne to reconcile the imagination and desire of man to the brutalities and perversions of this aspect of our life? Well, natural science and the technology which has issued from it are dominant tendencies of present culture, more conspicuously prominent in the United States than elsewhere, but everywhere all but universal in scope. That preoccupation with them should, whether consciously or sub-consciously, have played a part in generating "instrumentalism" is a not unreasonable hypothesis. What then? If one confronts this phenomenon and does not withdraw for consolation to the "pillaging" of other climes and epochs, what is to be done with it? It needs criticism, not acquiescence: granted. But there is no criticism without understanding. And no matter how much one may draw upon contrasting phases of life, Greek, Indian with Mr. Santayana, or the Golden Day of Emerson, Thoreau and Whitman with Mr. Mumford, for aid in this understanding, it is also true that without an understanding of natural science and technology in their own terms, understanding is external, arbitrary, and criticism is "transcendent" and ultimately of one's own private conceit.

Words, especially epithets, in philosophy are far from self-explaining. But the term "instrumentalism" might suggest to a mind not too precommitted, that natural science and technology are conceived as instruments, and that the logical intellect of mind which finds its congenial materials in these subjects is also instrumental—that is to say, not final, not complete, not the truth or reality of the world and life. Instruments imply, I should suppose, ends to which they are put, purposes that are not instruments which control them, values for which tools and agencies are to be used. The record of philosophy doubtless presents instances of almost utter self-contradiction and self-stultification. But it would require a mind unusually devoid both of sense of logic and a sense of humor—if there be any difference between them—to try to universalize instrumentalism, to set up a doctrine of tools which are not tools for anything except for more tools. The counterpart of "instrumentalism" is precisely that the values by which Mr. Mumford sets such store are the ends for the attainment of which natural science and all technologies and industries and industriousnesses are intrinsically, not externally and transcendentally, or by way of exhortation, contributory. The essential and immanent criticism of existing industrialism and of the dead weight of science is that instruments are made into ends, that they are deflected from their intrinsic quality and thereby corrupted. The implied idealization of science and technology is not by way of acquiescence. It is by way of appreciation that the ideal values which dignify and give meaning to human life have themselves in the past been precarious in possession, arbitrary, accidental and monopolized in distribution, because of lack of means of control; by lack, in other words, of those agencies and instrumentalities

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with which natural science through technologies equips mankind. Not all who say Ideals, Ideals, shall enter the kingdom of the ideal, but those who know and who respect the roads that conduct to the kingdom.

JOHN DEWEY.

Washington Notes

IT was interesting the other day to see Hiram Johnson arise in the Senate and hear him again proclaim his faith in the great rancid common people of the country. The occasion for Hiram's outburst—the first that has come from him in many months—was the recent speech made by the dashing Dawes before the Pennsylvania Society in New York. In that speech our vibrant Vice-President, once more hitting on all six cylinders with his valves freshly ground and free from carbon, pointed out certain imperfections he has discovered in the body over which he presides and which he has, if I am not mistaken, mentioned once or twice before—although about that I will not be certain. Anyhow, the real point of Mr. Dawes's speech was a denunciation of the direct primary to which he attributed most of the political evils of the day, and on which he largely blamed the excessive cost of campaigns.

It was the sort of speech that fits excellently into the plan of defense determined upon by the Hon. James M. Beck and the Hon. David A. Reed, who will be the generals, one inside the Senate, the other outside, in the great battle next year to put into the seat of the pious Pepper the idealistic and pure-souled Mr. Vare, whose Philadelphia machine we were recently told by another distinguished Pennsylvanian is an organization so kindly and benevolent that in many districts in the City of Brotherly Love very often not a single man or woman can be found with the heart to vote against it or its candidates. This, I think, is perhaps the best explanation that has been or ever will be offered of those Philadelphia districts in which Mr. Vare's opponent was not accorded a single vote—not even those of his own watchers. There is in this statement, made in all seriousness by ex-Governor Sproul, a tempting theme for the political analyst. It would be wonderfully interesting to speculate upon the pathological condition of a country in which such statements can be not only seriously presented, but seriously received by a great crowd of presumably intelligent men.

It strengthens the conviction held by an increasing number of judicious persons that in the present political period there is literally nothing too absurd to be put over, provided it can be done in the interests of the party so implicitly believed by our banking and business friends to be responsible for prosperity, and provided it be done with complete solemnity untainted by the slightest sense of humor no matter how carefully concealed. If there be so much as a trace of that trait in the speaker or writer the thing is naturally spoiled and bogs down. But with a complete blank on the humor side there is nothing that cannot be put over. The Presidential Spokesman has proved that a hundred times.

But much as I should like to dwell further on this topic so fascinatingly opened up by Governor Sproul's address, I find I am getting far away from Hiram, about whom I began to write. I liked Hiram's speech. Of course there is always a slight element of unsportsmanship about these Senators who assail the Vice-President in the Senate knowing full well that not having privileges of the floor, he cannot reply. But that is offset by the fact that the sporting instinct does not seem very dominant in the Vice-President, who has frequently assailed the Senate when the Senate could not reply. And anyhow, sympathy is wasted on the General. He does not conceive of himself as in need of it. Two things made Hiram's speech seem worth while to me. One was that it was pleasant to see someone take a good strong wallop at this business of using the direct primary as an alibi for all political corruption of whatever size or kind. It is the favorite defense not only of those who get licked, but of those who get caught and it is about time somebody was showing up the hollow bunk of it.

Hiram did it fairly well, I thought—not as well as I hope to see it done before they throw Mr. Vare out, but still with considerable pungency and force. The other reason I liked his speech was because it made plain that Hiram is himself again. For a good many months after the Presidential primaries of 1924 in which, it will be recalled, Hiram did not achieve any marked degree of success, it looked as if he intended never again to be on good terms with the world. It looked as if he had just given his fellow citizens up as hopeless and wanted no further contact with them. It is not an exaggeration to say that Hiram was sore and showed it. He lost his sunny smile and happy ways. He groused and sulked to himself and became more or less of a jest in and around the Senate. But Hiram has come back. Since the last session he has recovered his urbanity and lost his grouch. Actually he seems to be more free from care and happier these days than anyone else in the Senate and has won back most of his old friends and companions. Always Hiram when he wanted to be could be one of the pleasantest fellows in the Senate and at this session he seems to want to be. Those who have observed his changed demeanor and who comment upon his present serenity and good temper lay it to the fact that he is no longer all broken out with Presidential bee stings. For years Hiram's head was swollen all out of shape as the result of attacks by this poisonous insect. Apparently he is now not only completely cured of all the old stings, but is absolutely immune to new ones. In the Senate today any number of Presidential bees are flying around, but they don't bother Hiram any more. He is cured and it certainly is fine to see it. There is reason to think that in this and the next session he will be a very much more effective and engaging Senator than he has been in a long time.

My spies tell me that things are much more calm these days in the little Coolidge circle than they were a few weeks ago. About the middle of December there was some real anxiety lest the Lowden movement gather a headway that could not be stopped and there were some days when it seemed as if our noble President would be reluctantly

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forced to the conclusion that ten years is too long for one man to stay in the White House and, notwithstanding the eloquent arguments on the other side by Mr. Hearst and Mr. Curtis and Mr. Brisbane, declare that the eight-year tradition should not be disturbed. But recently things have brightened up and the belief at the White House is growing that it will be possible for Mr. Coolidge not only to be renominated, but to be reëlected without much trouble. And as that belief grows the idea that the time to depart from the eight-year tradition has arrived grows with it. Various developments for which there is no space here have aided in bringing about the new and more confident feeling at the White House. Chief among these, however, is the increasing certainty that the Democrats are sure to have a fight just as nasty and as bitter as they had before, and the other equally comforting fact that the wonderful press support so long enjoyed by the Coolidge-Mellon régime will not weaken under the third term attack. The most nervous member of the inner circle is poor old Papa Stearns, who is continually upset by the rumors of the unrest among the farmers of the great Republican states of the West. But the noble Calvin himself is much more calm and confident than before. It is the assurances of the press support that hearten and sustain him in these—for him—critical hours.

Speaking of press support, I cannot conclude without reference to the recent editorial in the New York Herald-Tribune, that devoted and loyal organ of Republicanism, in which the editor pointed out that the forty-two eminent scientists and scholars of Columbia University who disagreed with the Mellon-Coolidge foreign debt policy did not really understand the facts. Coming from the editor of the Herald-Tribune that seems to me one of the most perfect specimens of unconscious humor printed in a long while. Taken with its recent exultant editorial entitled A Sound Verdict on the acquittal of those two patriotic old gentlemen, Mr. Fall and Mr. Doheny, this does, I think, entitle the Herald-Tribune to the Pulitzer prize for the year. Or if not that, something else. Certainly it has earned something.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Habima and Sorel

La Dame aux Camelias, by Dumas Fils. Cosmopolitan Theatre, December 15, 1926.

The Dybbuk, by S. Ansky. Mansfield Theatre, December 13, 1926.

GOING to see Madame Cécile Sorel in La Dame aux Camelias after seeing the Habima Players in The Dybbuk is an experience that shows with a vengeance what spring life can have, how it can rebound and ease itself and dress itself up brightly; and can forget the far stars and what infinite memories are stored in the human body. It is like coming from the Arabian desert to the boulevards of Paris. Like having the Talmud with mayonnaise.

Perhaps it was because I am worn somewhat thin on middle-class seriousness without much endowment to be serious on, and of sincerity without much to be sincere about and if it has anything, without technique to carry it into the art of the theatre. Perhaps I am tired, too, of bad dressing among actresses—all over town you see nothing but clothes that might have come from almost any mob shop on Fifth or Madison Avenue, with now and then an expensive cross-street thrown in. At any rate, Madame Sorel seemed to me a rest, a change and a good lesson in half a dozen ways. She knows at least how to walk, how to get up and sit down, how to calculate her stage distances and how to wear her extraordinary gowns, creations in themselves in terms of clothing; she has diction, voice control and a glorious and shameless exhibitionism, all valuable things in the theatre. To despise such elements only shows that you do not see their point, comprehend the difficulty and labor and watchfulness with which they are acquired, and their place in the theatre art.

Otherwise Madame Sorel is the most delightful case I have ever known of empty competence. I have never seen so much expression that expressed nothing. Nothing gets through that perfect enameled skin. The heart within that handsome bosom beats with the pulse of the Rue de la Paix. I enjoy this Sorel performance, for a change now and again, because it is so divinely callous. It rests us from the sting of life. It is such pure theatre without any content to carry from life except the burden of the chic; it relieves all throes of immortality because it has no soul. It is as near to pure substance or material, sheer sight, sound and texture, as the human agent in art can attain.

There is the figure, like one of those fine women that Julio Romano and Vasari modeled up out of Raphael and Michelangelo. There is the voice going on and on, one production, one inflection, one tone, after another, saying nothing, but dispatching the business in hand. There is all this Parisian perfection, so intelligent, skilful, hard and fluent. There are the fine, large feet, beautifully shod and reshod as the play proceeds, and never, in the maddest moments dismayed from their admirable positions. This is the classic tradition; it has something exacting, aristocratic and secure about it. All it needs is the soul of a great artist to give it life and significance. As it is, the emptiness of content leaves the method all the more clearly exposed to study. And finally we come to the death in the last act; Marguerite Gauthier, after her sacrifice for her lover's sake, faced with death. Or perhaps it only sounded like death. At any rate there is the beautiful setting, the chamber pale yellow, the superb bed of the Bourbons, the lace, silk, maribou, ermine and smart flowing lines of the heroine's draperies. Everything glistens and glows and knows its business in the world. Putting this lady in her grave will only be like shutting her pearls into their case, they will be none the worse for it.

The Dybbuk

It seems almost inevitable that we should say that the performance of The Dybbuk by the Habima Theatre of Moscow cannot be thought of as theatre; that it is religious ritual and these people priests and priestesses. Such intensity and such absorption might seem to belong to a

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sect or to the religious passion of a race. The theatre might almost seem to be no home for it.

But nothing could be more mistaken. To say so is to be blind to the essence of the theatre as an art.

This performance by the Habima is the most complete work of art that I have seen on the stage since the performance of The Cherry Orchard by the Moscow Art Theatre three years ago. Chaliapin's Boris is magnificently whole and is superb throughout, but the rest of the production at the Metropolitan is flat and stale. We see now and again in the theatre great décor, great acting, great drama, but only two or three times in our lives do we see a quality expressed down to the last element in the theatre art, a perfect unity in idea, plot, and every other medium of theatrical expression, the music, the setting, make-ups, costumes, voice, gesture and group movement. Such completeness, such unity in essence and form, is the living principle in every work of art, the supreme soul of it, first and last.

I have an obligation to convey here what this production is like, but could not if I tried. I can only say that the play itself is the well known dramatic legend of Ansky's, done by Yiddish theatres over the world, in English in the remarkable production at the Neighborhood Playhouse last season and revived this, and now with the Habima Players in the original classic Hebrew. The story, as the world knows by now, is of the young student, the genius, who loves a girl and who in his exhaustion through penance and study and the fire of his love, calls on the powers of magic to make her his. He dies, and his soul passes into her body. The father of the student has been the friend of the girl's father, the two children have been betrothed to each other before they were born. One of the friends died, the other became rich, and he did not keep the pact, his daughter is to be married to another suitor. When the girl's father has given half his goods to the poor and the dybbuk by the force of excommunication from Israel has been driven from her body, she is left alone in a magic ring. The voice comes again; she dies and her soul joins her lover's. That is the bare outline of the myth; the possibilities of its theme are marvelous, the theme of a love so strong that after death it can drive itself into the body of the beloved. But with the story Ansky has inwoven the ecstasy of a race, all the shadowy origin of its passion, its faith, its primitive mysticism and confusion and strength.

This deep racial element takes The Dybbuk far away from me. I feel the presence of a terrific force and fire and tenderness, but much of it is foreign to me; it seems to draw from remote ages and from places far away in the deserts of Asia. In our western culture, in Greece, or in Italy—the Campo Santo at Pisa for example—men strove to create an outer form whose beauty would embody or represent the beauty of the idea within; a result that to their minds made for health and balance, in content and external fact, in impulse and release. But these expressive forms in the sacred objects, dances and rites, that I see in The Dybbuk, take their power from what they mean to their worshipers, they are pure symbols, all idea, rapture, fanaticism, fear, strength; they have no outer claim to beauty or expressiveness in themselves, not to me at least. Their beauty is inward, they live in men's minds. This passionate inwardness fulfills all parts of the Habima production of The Dybbuk and leads it to its summit.

The décor for The Dybbuk has also much that is not close to my visual impulse. But the dim, clay-colored walls, the naked, drab architectural shapes, and above all the extraordinary use of light are completely one with the whole idea. The very stylized make-ups, carried to the point of violent mask patterns at times—noses painted white on one side, black on the other, triangles in blue or green or black on the foreheads and so on—are of a piece, as a whole, with this effect of a dream dreamed for a thousand years by a race, and fiercely and tenderly kept. The acting is throughout admirable, every rôle and every ensemble and dance movement is served with devotion. Madame Anna Rovina has the heroine's part, the girl Leah; spiritually and technically her performance is magnificent.

I have seen stylized performances and the designs for many more. As a rule the stylization—the elimination or rearrangement to which the realistic is subjected for purposes of expressiveness—is only partially convincing. Too often it breaks down into mere device, entertaining in itself perhaps, but not profoundly imaginative—which means that what it says could not have been said in the image of any other form. This Habima production is the first instance of extreme stylization that I have ever seen in which the whole of it seems inevitable. Here in it we get the extreme stylization that ritual can go to, at the same time the truth that worshipers bring to ritual.

STARK YOUNG.

The Linden Boughs Are Bare

The linden boughs are bare
And all but bare the oak.
The cold air flows like smoke
And leaves are in the air.

That air, now brightly dead,
That smelled of blossoms' bones,
Washes a world of stones
Which have no bloom to shed.

The cold-winged ducks are down
From the passages of light.
They rest from driven flight;
They are not leaves, loose-blown.

The dead leaves have no wings
Nor hands nor words to trace
On water's upturned face,
Through water's rippled rings.

Their drifts of chattering rust
Leave ash upon his shoes
Who has no leaves to lose,
Whose heart, when leaves are dust,

Is the same quickened one—
Though shrill trees in the sky
Fling, stripped as if to die,
Their bodies toward the sun.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

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A Number of Things

The African Aristocrats

BEN BURBRIDGE'S motion picture, The Gorilla Hunt, recently on display at B. S. Moss's Cameo Theatre, is a disappointing successor to the Martin Johnson and the Snow pictures of African adventure. The subtitles are so implacably determined to frighten you that you end by leaning back and saying to yourself that even a gorilla twelve feet tall couldn't be as ferocious as all that—and these are only six. Yet the film does contain one unforgettable moment. In the heart of the continent, a thousand miles from a town, the cameramen visited a native king, and persuaded a dozen members of his court to parade before the celluloid. After the hundreds of simple, vacuous Negro faces you have seen in previous episodes, the sight of these courtiers is like a blow in the forehead. Tall, lean and black, they are swathed in robes like the Arabs and their faces are those of all the men who have been members of a sophisticated court and have lived by their wits and by flattery, since the world began. Idle, decorative, dignified, they disdain all the universe save their king; and him, too, they perhaps disdain in the sterile depths of their hearts. One turns his wise and weary head, with eyelids drooped, and murmurs between half-closed lips to his fellows: no doubt a warning that the king's favorite concubine has rolled an amorous eye in his direction and that he must be prepared to choose between her wrath today and His Highness's next week. You feel, watching these men who have gone past cynicism round the circle to the life of the gourmet again, that they are aristocracy; that the sweating, naked savages behind them are democracy; and that it would be well to have a legal order enjoining Mr. H. L. Mencken from seeing this film.

The Dial Award

The Dial prize for 1926 has been awarded to William Carlos Williams. The previous recipients have been Sherwood Anderson, T. S. Eliot, Van Wyck Brooks, Marianne Moore and E. E. Cummings. It would be difficult to find another literary prize of which the record seemed so consistently satisfactory: in every case, the award has been made to a writer of unmistakable originality and importance who was, at the same time, not in a position to profit by the rewards of popularity. To have brought such a group of writers to notice and to have made it possible for them to do independent work is a valuable contribution to our letters: perhaps no other magazine has matched it. All of these writers, however, were represented in the pages of the Dial during the first year of its present phase, 1920—as were also most of its other important contributors. And it is almost impossible to think of any interesting new American writer who has appeared since that time whom the Dial has encouraged. Yet, the supply of these charter contributors will presently become exhausted: with all respect to Doctor Williams, one is not sure that the prize-winning material of the Dial is not already beginning to run thin. What will the Dial do for deserving writers after another two or three years, if it continues as implacably as in the past to decline to interest itself in the original work of new artists?

Vantine's in Five Floors

Vantine's, in moving uptown, has suffered the fate of other distinguished shops which have felt the necessity of abandoning their old quarters. The curse of the Fifties seems to have fallen on it. Wandering around in the old Vantine's had the fascination of an Arabian night: there were galleries, basements and tea-rooms, all accessible by stairways, and one never knew what one would find among them. There was an enchanting effect of variety, richness and confusion: jewelry, gem-studded vanity boxes, red lacquered canisters of tea, copper and white-gold neckties, oriental-looking rabbits for gardens, embroidered slippers, candied fruits that looked as if they were meant for ornament, incense, obese Chinese statues, chop suey sets, sumptuous rugs, all seemed mixed up together with an air of improvisation. But today all these interesting objects are systematically separated and classified. There are five floors, inaccessible save by elevator, and a scrupulously segregated department on each. One realizes that the rabbits, the rugs, the fruits and the other things are not the delirious figments of a fantasy, but merely so many imported commodities: there are companies in the candied fruit business, companies in the stone rabbit business and companies that weave rugs; and for each of these manufactured products there is a well established demand. One suspects that the oddities for which the demand is uncertain have been rigorously eliminated from the new shop. At any rate, it is not possible this season to find at the new Vantine's those elegant cigarette-holders in the form of coiling snakes, with black spots on bright red, blue or orange and with amethyst or ruby eyes.

Doctor Adler Incognito

New York's greatest newspaper (not the Daily News) missed a trick the other day when it recorded, under the quiet headline, Brings New Psychology, an even more modest arrival: "Among the passengers [of the fogbound Bergenland] was Dr. Alfred Adler, a Viennese psychologist, who at one time worked with Freud and Jung, and parted from them two years ago. He said he was the exponent of individual psychology, based on studies of so-called inferiority and insecurity feelings gained in early childhood or caused by an inferior constitution." Doctor Adler is not merely *a* psychologist, he is almost *the* psychologist. Indeed, he is *the* Dr. Alfred Adler, the eminent, the well known, the unique Doctor Adler from whom Freud and Jung learned as much as he learned from them. Further still, he is the originator of the theory and phrase "inferiority complex," and as such deserving of flaming headlines, a long interview, a column, a column and a half. But all that the father of the most famous of complexes received was a paltry stick of small type which might well have given him a taste of his own discovery.

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Satire, Death of . . .

POLITICAL satire in America is for the moment the monopoly of Will Rogers. Others may practice it for tiny audiences; his is as near to the sum total of the "picture reading public" as anyone can come. The paraphernalia of gum and lariat which helped him in the Follies is now partly laid away; he is on a vastly popular lecture tour; he broadcasts; he writes for the Saturday Evening Post; he publishes books. He has only to write a play and create a comic strip to become universal. Our other satirists seem perfectly willing to leave politics in his hands; they concern themselves with business, with the crudities of social intercourse, sometimes with literature and religion. Politics either fails to interest them or offers itself as a topic which will not interest the public. The Peace Conference provoked a mild sketch in one of the revues; the Harding scandals, the long dullness of the present administration, our international policies, have not stirred any significant satirist to action. Even the tradition that satire is the weapon of the conservatives has not held; can anyone recall a satiric attack on the Reds? Except for parodies, was the indictment of Main Street and Babbitt met by Rotarian satire in any instance?

In America satire has often been the weapon of the man who pretended to be the average and the common. It has been the attack from below, and the integrity of the satirist has been proved by his illiteracy: Mr. Rogers follows the course of Bill Nye and Artemus Ward and Mark Twain. On the subject of art the following passage will find a parallel in the work of nearly every American humorist of the old school:

> We know about nine-tenths of the stuff going on under the guise of Art is the Banana Oil. They call it Art to get to take off the clothes. When you ain't nothing else, you are an Artist. It's the one thing you can claim to be and nobody can't prove you ain't. . . . (Or) . . . I don't want to see a lot of old Pictures. If I wanted to see old Pictures I would get D. W. Griffith to revive the Birth of a Nation. That's the best old Picture there is. . . . But this thinking that everything was good just because it was old is the Applesauce. . . .

This "common man's attitude" when it affects politics has interesting results. In Rogers's new collection, Letters of a Self-Made Diplomat to His President (A. and C. Boni: $2), you have old-fashioned democracy mingled with adulation for the man in power, jibes at the Democratic party, warnings about the Farmers and sage political advice:

> Being great as President is not a matter of farsightedness; it's just a question of the weather, not only in your country but in a dozen others. It's the elements that make you great or break you down. . . . You give me a few showers just when I need them most and let me have the privilege of awarding them around among the doubtful states as I see best . . . let the Argentine and Russia have a wheat failure . . . and I will be reëlected by such a large majority that I won't even take the pains to talk to you over the rodeo. . . .

And once in a great while, the quality of satire actually appears:

> You refuse to give the Philippines their complete independence. I am with you. Why should the Philippines have more than we do?

Mr. Rogers's special case isn't, actually, as important as the case in which satire finds itself. He was never a satirist until someone, ill-advisedly, told him he was one. The pleasure in hearing him was always in the crackling of small branches, in watching the sparks; there was never a great blaze. He was at his best when all he knew was what he read in the papers; he twisted headlines until they yielded some sort of comedy. When he takes to quoting long political essays on the nobility of the Fascist castor oil treatment, when he discusses international affairs not for their yield of wisecracks, but for their inherent bearing, he is a little lost child; and the pleasure he gives is diminished because he seems ill at ease, his cracks do not come off with the sharp report to which he is accustomed.

Actually, Rogers is a popular humorist upon whom satire has been thrust; Mr. Dooley was the last of our popular humorists to whom satire was a natural mode of expression. The failure of a dozen efforts to "write another series like Mr. Dooley," the journalistic highways strewn with the stillborn "characters" in imitation, testify at once to Dooley's greatness and to the changed circumstances which make a new satirist an unlikely occurrence. For it is quite possible that the necessity to write for ten million readers is the last deterrent to the satiric mind. Mr. Dooley began as a commentator for a Chicago paper; nowadays you cannot even begin with less than a syndicate; and just as the comic strip has to avoid all controversial subjects, satire becomes limited, by the actual mass of its readers, to tilting at straw men.

The successful satiric writers in other fields add other qualities to make themselves popular: sheer wit or an irresponsible fantasy or shrewd observation or wildly exaggerated forms of expression—you find the same qualities, in varying proportions, in Benchley, Stewart, Frank Sullivan, Marc Connelly. It is extraordinarily attractive, but its limitations are shown when you arrive at a bit of pure satire such as Benchley's recent page in The New Yorker in which, following certain municipal decrees, he reduced the Ritz Tower to a tenement. A straight satire sustained even to the limit of one magazine page is a rarity; except for its Washington correspondence, I recall nothing in the past six months in the New Republic; a less consistent reading, but fairly consecutive, brought me no satire in The Nation; Life, Judge, Vanity Fair, where satire ought to flourish, admit it in four line scraps; neither the Official Spokesman nor Michael Arlen has suggested the sharp edge to any writer. For these magazines, for these writers, the question of mass production is not so pressing; to explain the absence of satire you have to cast in other waters and discover what timidity or what indifference deprives us of the literary form in which pure intelligence will always find its highest satisfaction.

GILBERT SELDES.

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The Drug on the Market

IT is prevalent and poisonous. And the land is proud of it. Its manufacture is a huge industry; its sale is a popular art. Billions of dollars are spent in-making it: millions more go to the appurtenances of its use: and billions are paid in wages to men and women who devote their lives, openly, to its production, distribution, upkeep. The states all license it, turning a tithe of the wealth spent for it by our people to their own coffers. Great magazines and newspapers grow fatter with its advertisements. Some papers, indeed, are entirely given to its commercial and æsthetic aspects. And no publication, however ethical in editing its columns, however adverse to such drugs as coffee or tobacco, refuses to display its blandishments for money.

All America lives under its influence, and does not suspect that it is enslaved by a drug. "Shows" are planned yearly in great towns to propagate its sales and sing its praises. Special sections of the dailies detail its progress. Schools teach the beginner how to enjoy it. And everywhere ordinances and officials tune the whole life of the land to the needs and habits of those who use it.

It comes in varieties of kind which display distinct differences in expenditure of money. And these gradations have a truly hierarchic value. In a democracy where castes are vague, where money-power has few manifest badges of dress or standard of living; where indeed, millionaire and clerk go to the same movie, read the same books, travel the same roads, and where intellectual distinctions must be very carefully concealed, the conspicuous uses of this drug have become a standard of social status. The lowest classes aspire, first of all, to earn the means of *visibly* possessing it. When they have risen so far, they may be said to have a foot on the first rung of the Ladder of Success. Thence, they are urged, instructed, exhorted, by advertisement, editorial, numberless methods of herd pressure, to progress upward. It is neither uncommon nor unworthy to mortgage a farm or keep it bare of such "luxuries" as furniture and books, in order to purchase a more showy form of the drug: one whose effects are swifter and whose price is higher.

Like all drugs, this one has estimable virtues. Its effect is great on the motility of man, when used in moderation. It is a synthetic product. It is not found in a state of nature, but must be concocted; although, of course, from natural ingredients both mineral and vegetable. I do not know how man first came to put it together. Probably his love of new combinations led him. I doubt whether the incentive to increase our mobility on earth was there at the beginning. (The thing, by the way, was invented in Europe; and in Europe, largely still, it is controlled within the limits of good use.) But America soon transformed it from a delicate ornament to the mastering instrument it is today. It increases man's power to move things, and to move himself. It increases his power to see things. It opens up to him stretches of the world he might elsewise never reach: communities of action and intercourse with other men whom he might elsewise not come near enough to work with.

This virtue of the drug is a positive contribution. It makes it not unworthy to be placed in man's esteem beside other concoctions long known and loved. Alcoholic drinks, for instance, with their heat-making, cheer-making, fat-making, nerve-relaxing power: tobacco, which is a subtle sedative to mind and stimulant to nerve: coffee and tea which cheat fatigue: opium, morphine, cocaine, ether, by means of which men and women are helped across the crises of the body without the drain of too great suffering.

The drug's most typical and most desired effect is the sense of *self-motion*. The user feels that he is "on the go." The faith that he is covering ground or getting somewhere (although that "somewhere" be of no intrinsic value) is, of course, the type of morbid rationalization common to all addicts of all poisons. The sensation of flight is the main matter. The drug is a means of physical escape. It becomes a symbol of psychological escape.

Now "progress" is an American superstition whose chief feature is movement. To progress, you've got to move on: you've got to be perpetually passing from what *is* to what will never, never be—since as soon as *that* is, it also must be passed. This superstitious tic is potently flattered by the effects of our drug. From being a means of motion and escape, it has grown into a symbol of progress. It began by cajoling our nerves. It ends by cajoling our ideals.

Of course, this subtle transition from use to abuse is generic of all vices. Far too soon, the ill annuls the good which tempted us into the path leading to addiction. But with older narcotics, men have had time to learn the dangers hidden in delight. They have made elaborate mental and moral mechanisms to protect them. It is deemed a "social vice" in Europe to drink too much liquor. Men almost everywhere have become "afraid" to employ opiates without the doctor's sanction. Sometimes this instinct of defense hardens into law. America, for instance, as befits a timid land, is armored by Constitutional Amendment against the ravages of a mug of beer, against the blight of a little glass of wine. (This may not be known to the reader, who can verify it by consulting any lawyer.) The instinct of self-protection is naturally strong in the small and the weak. This makes it all the more amazing that America has developed no defense, and no awareness of the need of defense, against the holocaustic uses of this drug on our market.

The reason is, that we have not yet had it long enough. The lapse from use to abuse has been too subtle and too short. And the reason is, also, that there has been confusion between the sensory effects of the drug and what Americans consider their ideals. The notion, for instance, of bare movement as value—is this indeed a human value or is it the delusion of a drug-fiend? Or the idea of utilitarian progress whereby all present life is successively sacrificed to a never-reached tomorrow? Or the standard of measuring worth which makes man neglect himself and give his love only to the accumulation of dead external objects? It might well be argued that such "values" as these are the results of a drug-habit, rather than the spiritual traits of a Great Republic.

The key to the popular appeal of this narcotic is, then, an induced sense of flight—idealized into the delusion of "progress." The addict becomes nervous and restless. He hungers to "progress" with his drug to help him move;

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and also he aims to heighten the outward splendor of the drug itself, so that the world may judge his "progress" in the world by it. Battening on change, he dares not stop. He must go on moving. And since even motion can become a constant almost as steady as rest, he must be forever changing his pace of motion. His life must be accented motion—ever irregularly accented. And change, from being a means, becomes an end.

Now follow other results. Swift movement, increasing the extension of our sight, enfeebles the intensity and quality of what we see. With the delusion of seeing more, we see less: with the delusion of unfolding more miles of the world, the span of living shrinks. The drug is foe to meditation, to solitude, to careful and loving observance. It frees the addict from resorting to himself in the crises of dullness: he need not explore the devious trails of his soul, when so many, wider, asphalted roads are beyond him. But meditation and leisurely observance are the traits whereby life becomes real.

In lieu of them, we have the bare experience of passing. Moments are not dwelt in; they are overcome. The "present" of life, no longer a treasure to be mined, is a barrier to be vaulted. But moments and places are real to us, only in so far as we put ourselves *within* them. Now with this drug the converse happens: we take ourselves *away* from moments and from places. Moments and places grow void. Life becomes a succession of zeros.

Within each soul, there is a kindred process. The drug is a substitute for thought and for emotion. So hallucinatory is its sensuous effect of "progress" that the addict literally *moves out* of his troubles. Are troubles not matter for thinking and for feeling? And do not thought and feeling require some rest—or at least some constant, unconscious motion—in order to be enjoyed? This drug of ours, spelling flight, flight from the hour and the place upon us, brings flight as well from the problems of life that fill the place and the hour. . . . Remains only motion . . . only the emotion of motion.

The drug's use is a short-cut: and nothing is more dangerous and sterile. A short-cut through time, through place, through life—leads to death! Life is swift, and the value of life is the value of every moment. A machine, an act, a drug which makes us leap this moment is murderous. Alas! here, too, there has been confusion between the effects of a narcotic and what we consider our ideals. For we are proud of the short-cuts with which we clutter and sterilize our world. Newspapers, telephones, radios are most imperious short-cuts, demanding that we devote an ever increased portion of our days to details and surfaces of men and matters we might well ignore. Murder—in which we excel—is such a short-cut, solving many a personal problem, by the too efficient process of doing away with at least some of that problem's factors, or even with its *life*. Psychoanalysis may be such a one, when it is exploited to clean out a soul's desires in the hermetic quiet of some doctor's office, without the bother and the risk—and the salvation—of actually *living* them out. And the use of this drug is a short-cut. It eliminates the ground between the "beginning" and the "end." But both "beginning" and "end" of anything are abstractions, darkness, death. The *between* is life. So the use of the drug lessens life.

It has another, curious effect upon the user: a subtle one, hard to grasp—but not without importance. It lifts the user from the embrace of living things, setting him, half-insulate, in a machine. To walk the earth, to sail the sea, to ride a horse or plod behind one in a buggy—to drink the heady brews of grain or vine—these are all ways of touching life. But to box oneself into a thing of iron and race through the verdurous world as fast as ever one may, is to get almost out of life, even without the common aid of accidents. It is to exile oneself from the sensuous growing earth which is our ultimate food.

Now to move is to overcome resistance. And to overcome resistance *too well* is to avoid life's loveliness which dawns on men only when they are forced to pause. The perfect, unconscious mechanism of an animal knows neither thought nor beauty. The child begins to think and to enjoy, only when life stops him. This drug of ours induces a child's heaven—or an animal's. It makes things too easy: seeing the world, seeing folks, seeing your girl, too easy. And man can stand the adversity which bore him, far better than a lubricated ease. To see an endless series of places is to value none of them. To see too many folks is to see too little of oneself. For the value of things lies, in great extent, in the amount of ourselves we must put forth to get them. Take love-making for example. Resistance and time are so necessary for its right consummation, that even the brutes know it. Make the tryst between the boy and the girl too facile and too swift—eliminate the hazards of invading little brothers in family drawing-rooms—and the couple will very soon prefer the delights of a hard-won brown bottle to the delights of each other.

So the vicious circle rounds. And the drug whose use was to bring increased power and joy turns its addict impotent and sad. This specific concoction has done much to make of us a gloomy people. Or perhaps, it was the other way. Being a lugubrious lot, we have fallen victims to a drug which turns us even worse: making us roll along on lines of motion far less fancifully pleasant than the devious ones induced by alcohol.

Unfortunately the drug's ill results have not yet made us sick of it. We are merely demanding more of the same. Swifter mobility to kill time and trouble: more elaborate and expensive emptinesses to fill empty holidays. In the American town the effect is sadly visible. The streets are cluttered with the wheeled instruments in which the drug is used. And the air is fouled with its miasmic fumes. And the poor folk who took to it in order to be free, in order to know flight from trouble, find themselves grooved into traffic lines, manacled by traffic laws, crawling like slaves under the haughty signals of the cop.

Verily, the hour calls for a genius—for some great solver of problems to save the nation. I think at once of Mr. Henry Ford. He has been so successful in solving our transportation problems. He has earned so much wealth in that beneficent task. And he has shown himself so eager to go on serving his people—if possible, in bigger, better ways! Has he no scheme for curbing the evil uses of this Thing which causes our noble countrymen to roll along the landside in a complacent stupor?

WALDO FRANK.

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The Dog's Breakfast

I WOULD hesitate to bring to your attention the rather personal matter which follows, were it not for the conviction that much, if indeed not all of what I am going to say will be of assistance to younger authors about to publish, or about to be encouraged to publish, their first book. There are a number of purely practical considerations which they will do well not to neglect, considerations commonly disdained by those of finer æsthetic sensitiveness, but at bottom just as important. I think my experience has some value.

What I am about to tell you concerns, of course, the terms, manufacture, advance work, publicity and distribution of my latest book, The Dog's Breakfast, a thin collection of distinguished sonnets composed entirely in the open air. How they were written, the gusts of inspiration which blew them, like foam, from off my soul is an intimate question which I prefer not to touch upon—and anyway, I have given innumerable (and well attended) lectures on this topic in several dozen of the smallest cities in the United States. No, I must confine myself to the more prosaic details of the literary craft. To begin with my publishers: they accept, of course, whatever I write—how could they do otherwise? They cannot afford to refuse me—me, one of their best assets, the author of Seasonable Affiliations (third large printing), of Worm Fodder: an Inquiry, the moving-picture rights of which are still extremely valuable, and of many popular autobiographies. I am, indeed, in a position to dictate my terms to them, in describing which to you I am telling what, in the trade, is no great secret. For The Dog's Breakfast (a thin volume of distinguished triolets, largely devoted to the praise of alfalfa), I received a first payment (advance on account of royalties) of $65. Further, I am to receive 4.5 percent (many banks pay only 4.25) on the published price up to 5,000 copies, 5 percent up to 10,000, and 25 percent after the first million. And all sorts of rights besides. And eight free copies. And also—this is a feature of my own invention—an interesting adaptation from the stock market. The more people buy them, the higher stocks go up, don't they? Why not apply this to books? My publishers and I have done so. The Dog's Breakfast starts at $1.25, but this published price automatically goes up for every hundred copies bought. Buy early and avoid the rush. I have an option on five hundred copies for thirty days. I shall hang on until the price reaches 5⅞, and then sell. If I autograph them into the bargain, quite possibly I can push the price up to 6¼. Unless some big operator unloads at the same time. If the edition, by some freak of fate, doesn't sell out, I get the remainders on laughably easy terms. This is known as an unsold stock dividend.

That 1927 will be a bad year for baritones, sonnets and second-hand Fords my publishers well know. We shall get around this by describing The Dog's Breakfast as a lyrical ode written in alexandrines (an alexandrine is one part cream, one part gin and one part crème de cocoa). The next step is the distribution of free copies, as follows: one copy to every Protestant minister and every Catholic priest, in order to start controversy; one copy to every owner of a pedigreed Chow, Schnautzer, Pomeranian, Spitz, Hund, St. Bernard and Spaniel, some of the packages being addressed to the dogs personally. One copy to every vice-president of a holding corporation. An index is being compiled of all the words used in the book, and all directories are searched for persons whose names are the same as the word. Two copies are sent in each case with a covering letter: "Dear Mr. (or Mrs.) The, And, Grace, Sunset, However, Tranquil, Smith, E'er, E'en, MacKean, Bosky Dell, Effulgent, Schwantz, Diapason or It: Your name appears on page — of this book. We thought you would be interested. Please interest your friends." All this is only part of the advance work, which includes besides the memorization of passages of verse by salesmen, traveling far and wide, for use upon all occasions. Another nifty is the circularization of telephone subscribers, who are sure to be intrigued by a volume in which the following two lines, only faintly reminiscent of the catalogue of ships, are followed by a lot of other lines to exactly the same effect:

> Caledonia, Worth, Astoria, Dry Dock,
> Ashland, Chickering, Plaza, Washington Heights!

You see, I always have one eye on my greatest possible public. And besides, this way of writing is considered very high art in more quarters than you would expect.

Beginning a few weeks before the date of publication, for months afterwards I conduct the most intensive kind of a personal sales campaign. On the road. Every author should learn to speak as publicly as possible. So I tour the country delivering lectures on The Different Bedtimes in Australia, How to Raise Chickens, Our Past and Future, Square Miles of Rhinestones, Make Hay While the Sun Shines, and so forth, meanwhile earning more than expenses, collecting new publics in the form of membership lists of women's clubs, and material for my next book (Passing on a Curve, a distinguished volume of thin aubades) in the form of local telephone directories. And the autographs: I always charge ten cents apiece for these, a quarter extra for florid or affectionate sentiment in long-hand.

On my return, if The Dog's Breakfast (a series of ethical limericks, boards, $2.15 net) is still, as we say, "moving," I rent several clothing, upholstery and delicatessen stores and give away one book with every five dollars' worth of purchases. There is stern business logic behind this procedure: readers, like rabbits, produce more readers and more rabbits. Every book in circulation means a friend. every friend's friend buys a book, and so it goes. I have actually paraded about the streets as a sandwich man, selling one book (my famous Sobrieties and Sonorities, a distinguished collection of original quotations, it was) for ninety-nine cents, or two for a dollar. Even now, I am amazed at my success, and at my courage. It can't be done, the publishers said. For answer I silently point to my new necktie.

The rest of the time I circulate among the bookshops, asking for my own book. This is a typical author's trick, but most of them do it very badly, refusing the book if found. On the contrary, I always buy all that remain on

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the shelves, if any do. Demand creates demand. If the book is absent, or not in stock, I disappear for a moment behind the juvenile counter and, emerging in a brisk red wig, ask for it again. Not infrequently the salesman gets discouraged and returns to Nebraska. My disguises are subtle, and endless. Once I am sure a bookstore lacks either my Polichinelle: a Diatribe, or Mandamus: a Soliloquy, I reappear as often as ten times in the course of the day, dressed as a fireman, a harlot, a haberdasher, an avenger, a plumber's helper, a roué, a harridan, an expatriate or an exclusive clubman. This method never fails.

I have not read Barnum's Life (Tanbark and Tom Thumb, a thin volume of distinguished anagrams) in vain, and I credit him with my most lucrative exploit. Dressed as a Bishop of the M. E. Church, I kicked my own book (at that time Inventory: or the Deceased) three miles down the main street to the door of the bookstore where 1,000 copies were secreted. You know what I mean by hot cakes?

All of which is doubtless very interesting, but my real message to you this evening is to buy one, or more, copies of The Dog's Breakfast (a thin, distinguished discussion of other topics, bound in light limp verse), when, and if, it appears.

ROBERT LITTELL.

CORRESPONDENCE

Miss Sergeant's Holmes

SIR: The penurious policy governing the magazines (quarterlies, monthlies and weeklies) of America in limiting the length of articles regardless of the value in thorough treatment of a particular subject has resulted in an overwhelming multiplication of superficial comments and chit-chat. To call our book reviews sketchy is putting it mildly; our one-and-two-page write-ups barely skim even the blurbs of popular books, to say nothing of the haphazard method afforded ideas and personalities. Massness in diversity of topics instead of depth of study in fewer essays has been the general rule.

The publication in the December 8 issue of the New Republic of Miss Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant's article on Justice Holmes is, therefore, to be hailed with many husky huzzahs. The mere length of the paper may not be a deliberate departure from present-day policy; but the completeness and clarity of it deserve emulation. Miss Sergeant's essay is a superb piece of writing, technically and imaginatively. By using the grand manner in handling her thoughts, neither stinting in expression nor being voluble, she has succeeded in recreating for us a noble man.

DORIS FOX BENARDETE.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

Philosophy vs. Metaphysics

SIR: I rise to disagree with my friend Waldo Frank. In his article on Philosophy Hunting he makes a poetic defense of metaphysics as the eternal element in art and in science. He severely castigates Mr. H. L. Mencken for his characterization of metaphysics as "flea chasing," and Dr. Will Durant for his "subtly diffused distrust of the entire silly business." In this controversy I am not on the side of the angels.

Metaphysics, in my opinion, has had a very real and very evil influence on the development of human thought. Frequently has it distracted the mind from searching inquiries into human problems to fruitless contemplation of something that never was on land or sea. Truly has metaphysics been defined as the seeking by a blind man in a dark alley of a black cat that isn't there.

The Greek philosophers, in trying to give a rational explanation of the phenomena of human life, invented metaphysics. But they, especially Plato, invested the subject with a poetic charm that still fascinates. In the hands of the mediæval scholastics the poetry was extracted, and metaphysics became a terrifying verbalism called "logic," which led to arid controversies and to nothing else. Having no content metaphysics was strong on method. Was a table a real table or merely a concept of a table? And so the realists and nominalists began a controversy which, under different names, has continued to this day.

Unlike the scholastics the modern metaphysicians do not disport themselves for the sake of pleasing God. Rather do they seek to please one another by attacking anyone in the field of philosophy who is beholden to the laity. William James was never accepted by them as a true philosopher. The adepts in the metaphysical game are either sterile dialecticians who delight to draw the razor of "criticism" across the throat of anyone who is creative or vivifying, or they are gasping mystics who haven't the chest capacity necessary to climbing intellectual mountains.

When the Story of Philosophy was published a cry of anguish went up from the metaphysicians. For long they had played the leading rôle, and now they were out of the picture! That was worse than being "obscurely hung." Its author is the first philosopher who has had the courage to slight metaphysics in a history of philosophy. All hail to Dr. Will Durant!

J. SALWYN SCHAPIRO.

New York, N. Y.

Can We Tax Corporations?

SIR: The editorial, Can We Tax Corporations? beginning on page 56 of the December 8 issue of the New Republic, is in error in two respects. (1) The assumption is made that the dividends of a corporation are entirely tax-exempt in the hands of the stockholder. While Section 216 of the Revenue act of 1926 provides that, for purposes of the normal tax, the amount received as dividends is allowed as a credit, Section 213 makes dividends a part of income and hence taxable except for the credit allowed in Section 216. Section 256 goes still further and provides that corporations must report the names of those to whom dividends are paid (Note also Article 1080 of Regulations 69). (2) The error of assuming that dividends are entirely exempt has led to the argument that taxpayers can incorporate, pay the corporation tax, and then declare tax-free dividends, thus evading high surtaxes. The truth is quite the contrary, since a rich man would in this case pay the corporate tax of 13½ percent plus the surtaxes instead of the normal tax at the rate of 5 percent plus the surtaxes. (Of course it is true that this same rich man *may* avoid the surtaxes by incorporating and leaving the earnings undistributed.)

JAMES W. MARTIN.

Emory University, Ga.

[We were mistaken in leaving the impression that dividends are exempt from surtaxes as well as from the normal tax. Nevertheless we are informed by competent experts that there are cases, depending on the size and sources of the income in question, in which the individual can reduce his taxes by incorporating.

It is furthermore true, as our correspondent points out, that if a rich man incorporates and does not pay himself a salary or dividends to the full amount of his income, he may save the tax on the undistributed surplus. Such surplus may be applied to the purchase of securities or other forms of reinvestment. It is the custom of large income receivers not to spend all their incomes, but to reinvest large portions of them.

All the qualifications which must be accepted do not affect, it seems to us, the desirability of imposing a progressive tax on corporations if it can be done. Our reasons for urging this action were only partly dependent on the dividend tax exemption.—THE EDITORS.].

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The Last St. George

My Own Story, by Fremont Older. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

FREMONT OLDER is the last St. George, a crusading journalist who has survived into an age when few editors have much concern for righting wrongs or exposing iniquity. An occasional newspaper still continues to wage such war, but the individual journalist is now more likely to be found acting as the dragon's counselor on public relations than putting on a fireman's helmet and charging against the jaws of flame. Older himself, as we shall see, has modified his attitude in recent years, though from different motives, and is now inclined to explain the dragon's pyromania in terms of his pituitary or as being due to bad housing conditions in the cave where he was hatched.

This newspaper man, the only one with a national reputation to be found west of William Allen White, was managing editor of the San Francisco Bulletin for twenty-four years, from 1895 until 1914, since when he has edited the Call, in that same cold, foggy and temperamental city. When he began the phase of his career for which he is best known, his service with The Bulletin, California politics was dominated by the Southern Pacific Railroad. The whole state government from top to bottom was under its control. Not infrequently out of an entire trainload of transcontinental passengers only three or four had paid their fare. The rest traveled on passes, which even included their berths and sometimes meals in the railroad restaurants.

> The Southern Pacific Railroad was openly the Republican party. When there was a Republican governor in Sacramento, the office of the governor was in the office of William F. Herrin, attorney for the Southern Pacific in San Francisco. . . . The Southern Pacific also dominated, to a large extent, the Democratic organization. Virtually everyone of influence supported the railroad, because it was in control.

Older's professional career covered as well an era of corruption in San Francisco municipal affairs, when Abe Ruef was boss and Eugene Schmitz Mayor and the shame of the city was notorious the country over, even in a day when so many communities had so much reason for shame.

Against this corruption Older fought for many years with berserker rage and implacable devotion. Why he did so, why of ten thousand men this one felt called to rectify the injustices and halt the dishonesty he saw about him, are questions one must leave to the psychologist—a better psychologist than any who has yet appeared. This editor drew together the few powerful citizens of San Francisco who were also concerned about civic decency (most of the "best people" have always been in the other camp); he managed, with desperate expedients, to keep the publisher of The Bulletin in line despite the threat of ruin to the paper, because of Older's policies; unceasingly he schemed, negotiated, pleaded, threatened. He would work all day getting out the paper, and a fine job he did, too, giving San Franciscans a much better journalism than they deserved or wanted; and then he would work all night, if need be, planning with detectives how to get evidence against the grafters; persuading a weak brother to turn state's evidence; piecing out the chain of facts which led to the man highest up in the edifice of civic corruption, Patrick Calhoun, head of the United Railways.

This work was dangerous. Calhoun's agents employed a half-breed Mexican gunman to murder the editor. He planned to fire from the window of an office building across the street, and it was only by great good luck that a resident member of the underworld whom Older had befriended learned of the plot and warned him. On another occasion he was actually kidnapped. A group of thugs hustled him into an automobile, took him out of town, a pistol against his ribs to keep him from making any outcry, and at a nearby railroad station he was put on board a fast train to Los Angeles and locked in a stateroom which had been previously engaged. The plan, he afterward learned, was to take him from the train at a lonely spot in the mountains, kill him and throw his body into a deep canyon where it would remain undiscovered for weeks and perhaps forever. The gang had been offered $10,000 for the murder. This scheme, also, was circumvented through sheer chance. A young lawyer happened to be on the train and overheard a few words between two members of the gang. Realizing Older's danger, he left the train at the next station, at one o'clock in the morning, communicated with the authorities and had the editor rescued further down the line.

These incidents may seem fantastic to persons who are not acquainted with the rough and ready practices of the far West, or with the bitterness of the struggle when entrenched privilege in those states was first asked to relinquish some of its unjust advantages. They are familiar to the present reviewer, who was a reporter on The Bulletin during some of the most exciting days of Mr. Older's fight. I remember the day when Francis J. Heney, special attorney for the graft prosecution, while arguing in court, was shot and dangerously wounded by a man who, being captured and locked up, was found dead in his cell a few days later. He had supposedly obtained a pistol somehow, and committed suicide. I recall how the home of an important witness in the trial of Calhoun was dynamited, this witness and his family escaping death only by a miracle. I remember how thugs were hired to beat up The Bulletin's newsboys, how its editors were ostracized in the Bohemian Club and elsewhere, how every possible means was employed to halt the investigation and keep San Francisco as she was, "corrupt and contented."

As everyone knows, Mr. Older survived to see his group victorious. Mayor Schmitz fled to Europe. Abe Ruef was sent to prison for fourteen years. Hiram Johnson broke the grip of the Southern Pacific machine, was elected governor, and introduced the most progressive state administration which had as yet been seen in this country. Older, with a national reputation won after fifteen years' fighting, might have been satisfied.

But he wasn't; and here comes the most remarkable part of the story of this remarkable man. With Ruef behind the bars, he sat down to think. "I realized," he says,

> the conditions Ruef had found around him [as a young man just out of college]; the price he had seen other men paying for success; the temptations pressing upon him to win popularity, power and acclaim by the only methods open to him. . . . Ruef did not make those conditions. It was we, the people, who made them. We had made money our measure of success, regardless of how the money was acquired. . . . We were responsible for the environment in which Ruef found himself.

And so the triumphant reformer, on the heels of his

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great success, began a new campaign to get his arch-enemy out of jail again! He finally achieved this, not by giving his real reason, which would have been over the head of San Francisco then as now, but by sentimentalizing his plea.

This led him, naturally, to a careful consideration of criminality in general, of the conditions which produce not only grafters and highwaymen and burglars, but prostitutes and panhandlers. He became famous as a friend of ex-convicts, and presently began publishing serially in the newspaper the autobiographies of some of these outcasts. He printed thus My Life in Prison, by Donald Lowrie, a book which greatly accelerated the movement for prison reform; A Voice from the Underworld," the life story of Alice Smith, a prostitute; You Can't Win, by Jack Black, and several others. Older's ranch in the foothills of the Santa Clara Valley became a refuge for men just out of prison, and some very queer characters have for a few weeks or months made a pretense of earning their keep by puttering among his flowerbeds.

Out of his extensive experience Older has modified his first naïve view that those who go wrong are helpless victims of faulty environment. "Now I can only say," he writes,

> that I do not understand their motives, I do not know what makes them what they are. Until we do understand I believe we should withhold judgment, we should be patient and try to understand.

This creed he tries to put into practice in regard to everyone:

> Losing my faith in the ability of man to change much has not made me cynical. His helplessness, and his inability to do any better than he does, incline me toward a greater pity and compassion for all mankind. From being a savage fighter against wrong and injustice as I saw them in the old days, I have gone clear over to the point where I do not blame anyone for anything. I believe at all times man does the best he is capable of at the moment. It may be a very bad best, but it is *his* best. If I continue to progress along these lines, and live long enough, I may yet be able to pass what I consider the supreme test—*tolerance for the intolerant.*

It is perhaps sufficient comment on the man to say that today he comes as close to fulfilling this ideal as any member of his generation; and on his book that it adequately, even though externally, portrays his extraordinary personality.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Early Transatlantic Travelers

The American in England during the first Half-Century of Independence, by Robert E. Spiller. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 415 pages. $4.

ALTHOUGH the American colonies won their political independence from the mother country as a result of the Revolution, the new nation continued for long to remain dependent upon England economically, socially and intellectually. A steady stream of Americans crossed the ocean for business, recreation, observation or study. Indeed, the number of those who sojourned in the old country for shorter or longer periods is rather surprising and, considering the conditions of those days, compares favorably with the hordes who make the journey now. In two respects, however, there was a difference between the two periods. Between 1780 and 1830 mere recreation and sight-seeing were the motives of a much smaller proportion of travelers than nowadays, and comparatively few women made the journey with their husbands or fathers until both the comfort and safety of ocean travel had greatly increased by the introduction of steam.

In this volume, the author has attempted to represent "the attitude of the average American in England in terms of the basic motives for his tour" and to examine especially those men who "cut into prejudices or established bases of fuller understanding between the two nations." For his material he has consulted not only travel books but diplomatic correspondence, stories, poems, letters and diaries, printed or in manuscript. He has ransacked a vast store of sources and perhaps the chief criticism of the book might be that he has not rejected enough and has assembled his data, most of it interesting in itself, too mechanically.

We have first a preliminary chapter describing the means of travel which gives an excellent picture of the conditions as they gradually altered for the better. There then follow nine chapters in which the author gives us the observations and opinions, with many quotations, of the travelers of each class, such as students, artists, diplomats, business men, philanthropists, authors and so on. This arrangement has advantages in some cases. For example, in the chapter on students it is clearly brought out how at first many young men went, more particularly for science at Edinburgh, to prepare themselves for their various professional careers in America. Later the numbers dwindled somewhat, but this did not indicate a decrease of intellectual dependence, for those who went in the later decades did so to prepare themselves to teach in the American colleges, and the rank and file of students, although remaining in America were still dependent, at one remove, upon the Scotch and English universities in many subjects.

In some of the chapters the mechanical arrangement noted makes for repetition which becomes somewhat tiresome. In a good many cases there is not a sufficient difference in the point of view of a cultivated author, business man or philanthropist to warrant putting their observations into different water-tight compartments, and as the author has been properly careful to keep to a chronological arrangement in each chapter, we find ourselves traversing much the same ground in each of them.

On the whole, the comments of travelers of all the groups are favorable to England and her people. All the better class went liberally provided with letters of introduction and the warm hospitality in which these constantly resulted is a frequent topic of comment. As a rule the travelers themselves were open and broad-minded; they took readily to English ways and customs, and a disgruntled voice was rare among them. On the other hand, America sent over, then as now, those queer specimens which arouse the surprise of compatriots and foreigners alike. "This place swarms with Americans," wrote Henry Brevoort from Liverpool in 1815; "you never saw such a motley race of beings—some seem as if just from the woods, yet stalk about the streets and public places with all the easy nonchalance that they would about their own villages." The book contains a good deal of interesting material and comment, but a better arrangement of it would make easier reading and the judicious cutting of not a little would make the outlines of the picture clearer.

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS.

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A Lesson for Translators

The Life of Captain Alonso de Contreras, an Autobiography. Translated by Catherine Alison Phillips. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 288 pages. $3.50.

Quevedo's Humorous and Satirical Works. Broadway Translations. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 396 pages. $5.

AN object-lesson for translators and editors of biography may be found in the comparison of these two books. Although no mention of excision or rearrangement is made in David Hannay's introduction to Mrs. Phillips's translation of the autobiography, it is difficult to believe that any record so swiftly dramatic flowed directly from the pen of a contemporary of Lope de Vega. The narrative of Alonso's crimes and adventures courses along without comment or apology, completely modern in tempo, "dated" only by its wholly objective attitude—the sincerity of its philosophy of action as the significance of life, devoid of analysis, moral judgment or arrière-pensée. As irresponsible in ethic as Cellini, Alonso de Contreras claims no justification as a temperamental artist. He is unconcerned with any art, and for perilous living he has a natural genius, innocent of all method save that of consistent opportunism, developed on purely inspirational lines. "By turn apprentice, valet, soldier, sailor, executioner, pirate and judge; captain on sea and land, governor of cities, occasional hermit, and commander of the order of Malta," his ingenuous history has the carefree detachment of Sinbad the Sailor's. He moralizes in an occasional interjection, and unfailingly invokes the blessing of his God upon any enterprise of however disreputable a nature. A wholly conscienceless rogue, he is at all times a pious one, and entertaining as well—a combination of qualities no more paradoxical than his own ethical code. The finest flavor of the book—critical conventions notwithstanding—may be obtainable by reference to moral as well as to æsthetic judgments, since it is the spice of contrast with current notions which will season most piquantly this sixteenth century dish of Mediterranean adventure.

Contemporaneous with Contreras is the satirist Quevedo, whose Life of the Great Rascal is referred to by its latest translator, Sir Roger L'Estrange, as "the greatest picaresque novel in any language"—"a penetrating study" of a "universal character," presented in "inimitable style." The reverence of the translator for Quevedo's work is such as to permit no mitigating selectiveness. We have sixteenth century satire served steaming from the very pot in which it was presented to appetites capable of bolting ecstatically morsels that our own effete century cannot stomach. Sir Roger presses upon us in the form of notes and appendices historically correct implements for bringing the most savory tidbits within reach of our understanding, and his Introduction manifests the relentless hospitality of the Scottish host plying a reluctant guest with haggis. The whims of the pernickety should not be permitted to interfere with such abundance of cultural refreshment. His historical enthusiasm is as sincere as it is stubbornly well meaning. Graceless though it may appear in view of what is the height of good cheer to the literary antiquarian, we yet predict that to the average twentieth century palate the works of Quevedo will seem not only ill-savored but dismal. The contrast with the Contreras translation tends to make one believe discriminating reduction a formula for successful redaction.

D. B. WOOLSEY.

Psychology Is Called to Order

The Meaning of Psychology, by C. K. Ogden. New York: Harper and Brothers. 326 pages. $3.

ONE American textbook, the worst of the species, makes the fatuous boast that students can read it without being prejudiced either for or against any conceivable dogma of psychology. This is not compromise but surrender. What the virtuoso has to do is to represent conflicting views so as to expose fallacies and reveal convergences with justice to all and malice toward none. In the science of psychology as at present constituted this task is hardly easier than the one which Lincoln faced at his second inaugural; but Mr. Ogden has handled it with superlative nicety. The peculiar difficulty of the situation lies in this: it is impossible for a science to have commerce with the soul, yet it is impossible for most people, including many psychologists, to give it up. Mr. Ogden's adroitness in dealing with this impasse is altogether worthy of the Great Emancipator.

> What is important [he says, after the usual distribution of compliments] is to notice how intimately observations of bodily behavior, together with inferences as to the working of the nervous system, are mingled in all our descriptions of the events in our lives with observations of our feelings, our thoughts, our interests, and the rest of our experiences.

This is as much as to say that some people call it science and others call it soul. The expression "double language hypothesis," by which it is implied that the dualism of mind and body is a duality of words alone, the data being all of one kind, is a euphemism; by this euphemism science can treat as nervous integration what popular prejudice treats as anything it likes.

Fortified by such a euphemism Mr. Ogden is able to see much good in the work of all psychologists without feeling in the least bound to accept any man's work at his own valuation. He can point out the great significance of the new and justly famous "gestalt" psychology as a real attempt to throw light on the problem of the building of experience into what Mr. Clive Bell would call significant form, and still feel free to point out that "gestalt" means nothing in particular and names a problem rather than solves it. Going back to the late lamented instincts of Professor McDougall he can review them as a useful classification of human activities without in the least crediting what Professor McDougall nevertheless regards as the most important part of the whole show (though Mr. Ogden tactfully refrains from saying so!): the psychical nature of the instincts.

Thus Mr. Ogden gently brings the reader around to a modified behaviorism. We are prepared at length to follow the scientists in their attempts to observe the activities of infants and animals and to discover why we behave like human beings by the dissection of nerves and glands. But the author is a canny and moderate behaviorist. He is far too much of a scientist not to know—as Mr. Watson at least will not admit—that most of what we "know" about the behavior of the glands and neurones is highly inferential. It no doubt will lead to knowledge; but at the present writing it is by no means free from "all possible probable shadow of doubt, all shadow of doubt whatever!" The suasion he exerts upon us is quite properly addressed not to existing facts or principles but to methods and atti-

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tudes. What we need most to know about psychology is how little we really know; and then we need to know that we shan't know more by talking double-language rhetoric. Thus he quotes Stout, standing upon the frontier of knowledge and invoking "the fundamental nature of that relation between mind and reality, or between reality and mind, which we call knowledge." But this, says Mr. Ogden, "is giving up the problem in the grand style!"

Mr. Ogden's behaviorism is also qualified by two further circumstances of a much more serious nature, however. One appears to be due to a lapse in Mr. Ogden's otherwise universal knowledge, though it requires some temerity even to imagine that the erudite Cambridge scholar and editor of two cosmos-spanning series could have suffered even the most partial eclipse. The chief deficiency of strict behaviorism is the difficulty it encounters in proceeding from isolated acts to the complex and varied activities of civilized man. Where is the connection between the conditioned reflex and the tortuous motives of the Complete Man? It has seemed to a few American scholars—Mr. Dewey being chief among them—that anthropology offers the only means of escape from mere anatomy on one side and mere rhetoric on the other. Anthropology observes human behavior in its completed form, and reveals in it an historical continuity which psychologists would do well to study. Mr. Dewey has even gone so far as to lay down the principle—it cannot be repeated too often—that an indispensable condition of organized human behavior is preëxisting organized behavior. Among American psychologists Mr. Robert Kantor alone seems to have grasped the full significance of this principle and to have made it the basis of his difficult but amply repaying two volume treatise on the Principles of Psychology. Mr. Ogden has read (or at least cited) Dewey's Human Nature and Conduct; but he appears not to have taken in its most fundamental idea. He has apparently not thought it worth while to read Kantor's Principles. That is his loss, and a grave one.

Mr. Ogden's other leading peculiarity is his softness for Cambridge mysticism, whereby a most extraordinary religio-metaphysical direction has been given to the latest developments of science—the electron, relativity, the quantum theory, etc. These hypotheses have upset many established scientific notions, replacing them with conceptions so attenuated that the Cambridge mystics have dared to believe that science is now at last gazing upon the radiant face of the Most High. "All through the physical world," says Eddington, the mathematical physicist, as quoted by Ogden, "runs an unknown content which must really be the stuff of our consciousness." Why must it? Why is this any less an invocation in the grand manner than the same words declaimed by Stout? But this is not the place to thresh out the large problem of scientific mysticism. Suffice it to say that Mr. Ogden is captivated by it along with his Cambridge colleagues. Therefore after having dismissed the mind as "double language" he is obliged to bring back consciousness in the only really hazy and pointless chapter in the book, the theme of the dubious resuscitation being that "we do not observe consciousness; we have it, or are it." What such a saying means for psychology is, to say the least, obscure. But what it means in Mr. Ogden's metaphysics a later chapter devoted to the Cambridge mysticism makes amply clear. It is a part of the new scientific theology.

It would certainly not be true to say that these two peculiarities destroy the value of the book. As a whole the volume remains a tour de force of clear exposition and cogent criticism. But the deficiencies noted above are none the less important, being indeed the more important the better we think the book to be otherwise. Perhaps they even serve to exhibit the crucial limitation of the textbook as an institution, the impossibility of a book which shall be satisfactory to everyone. Mr. Ogden notes that many readers "feel a difficulty in comparing and combining together the views, opinions and information" of contemporary psychology. No doubt they do. No doubt one can argue from this the desirability of doing it for them. The feat may nevertheless be impossible. By another argument some scientists retort that persons for whom the difficulty of comprehensive study is insuperable should make up their minds that learning is not for them, and that it is the chief duty of scholars to assist them thus to face the fact by telling them so in no uncertain terms. But alas, this view of the matter runs athwart our most cherished educational convictions!

C. E. AYRES.

The Road Round Ireland

The Road Round Ireland, by Padraic Colum. New York: The Macmillan Company. 492 pages. $4.

THE Road Round Ireland led Mr. Colum into public houses and cottages in every county of the land, and he had occasion there to attend weddings and wakes and to talk about legends of the heroic age, or coöperation, or whatever else might be in the people's minds. It is the Irish country and the Irish people, as they are out of what they have been, that Mr. Colum means to draw. He talks companionably with tinkers, swaps poetry with authentic bards, remembers the old Gaelic literature and the high annals of this clan or that. He knows his Ireland, Mr. Colum, from Partolan and the Firbolgs to Sinn Fein.

But in spite of this, as an interpretation of Ireland, old or new, many of these sketches are disappointing. The prose is lean and sometimes commonplace, leaving pale impressions which should be sharp, culs-de-sac where finished ideas should be. There is something in Mr. Colum's language that will not let him say what he would say—either he must leave it suggested, darkly unraveled, or he must blast it with obviousness. Ireland, as a land and a people to touch the imagination, is more real to the reader of a too-sweet novel by Donn Byrne than to Mr. Colum's follower on the road, despite the great variety of things that he can learn.

The part of the book to which the reader is bound to skip, therefore, is the Dublin part, where the author has set down his knowledge and reminiscences of people who have enriched the name of Dublin in the past thirty years. Mr. Colum knew the Abbey Theatre from its beginnings—Sean O'Casey, W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, J. M. Synge and Edward Martyn were his friends. He has a long sketch of George Moore, which is not so entertaining as the one on Joyce, whom he knew at the University. It is good to know (if you don't already) that Joyce once remarked to Yeats, "We have met too late: you are too old to be influenced by me." And that Yeats at another time said to Joyce: "I do not see in your beginnings enough chaos to make a world." There is more to draw from this part of the book than from the rest. Dublin is made clear in it, through the personalities of Dublin. And the enthusiasm of the young nineteen hundreds, when much was sown which has now been reaped, echoes again in remembered and half-forgotten voices.

E. F.

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Fiction Notes

The Hard-boiled Virgin, by Frances Newman. New York: Boni and Liveright. $2.50.

WHEN publishers long to produce a book whose cleverness they recognize but which, they know, will be caviar to the popular taste, they run to Mr. Cabell and Mr. Mencken to give them a leg up toward a more discriminating public. Mr. Cabell and Mr. Mencken are obliging. They obliged in this instance. Their puff appears upon the jacket of this book, which is, we are told, "an original and first-rate job," "a small masterpiece." The conclusion is that the author of The Hard-boiled Virgin is so shy and mistrustful of her own powers that she will advance only when armed with the approval of two arch-discriminators. A paradox presents itself for analysis. Here we have an indubitably gifted woman—gifted with humor and penetration and further, with an uncanny scent for and sense of the small harrowing futilities of existence—a woman whose creative instincts lead her inevitably to the evolution of a highly sensitive, acutely organized human being whom life baffles, harries and leaves unfulfilled, a tragic figure in spite of the author's cool, flagrant, elaborate irony. And upon these gifts which should lead her to simplicity, sincerity and freedom she imposes a flippancy of manner, a fairly ribald ruthlessness, a style that induces gusts of rage in the reader, and a vulgar title. All in vain. This defensive panoply of oddity would not deceive an infant in arms. It is just self-consciousness, goading its victim to excesses. How can this woman of rapier wit seriously believe that there is anything clever about her affectedly involved, cumbersome sentences? The superlatively skilful vocabulary that flashes through them sustains the reader, but he does wish she wouldn't.

E. B. H.

West of the Moon, by Anna Robeson Burr. New York: Duffield and Company. $2.50.

CONFIRMED realists will shake their heads over this book, an exotic romance with a neat flavoring of mystery. Others will justly find it glamorous. Following the trail of a young genius, Stephen Curt, who had vanished ten years previously, an American girl discovers that he has been involved in the secret sinister proceedings of a Royalist society in Europe. Her quest leads her to a strange old house in Paris, the meeting place of exiles, to a palace on the Venetian lagoon where a spidery old man spins his plots for the society, and finally to the lonely Dolomites. The author creates a sustained atmosphere which prevents her plot from seeming either melodramatic or improbable. The book is written from a sophisticated viewpoint, with a hint of symbolism, and is a welcome escape from the too plausible realities of every day.

E. H. W.

Martin Hanner, A Comedy, by Kathleen Freeman. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

THIS, Kathleen Freeman's first novel, is delightful comedy in the Meredithian sense of that name, and is written in a manner of distinguished simplicity. But while the writer is simple, she now and again plays with Greek-derived words in a way that is beguilingly young and mirthful. Her vision of college towns and dons and students has sanity, humor, irony and gratitude for living. The don, her hero, is never allowed to overcome his insufficiencies and remains a little dry. The last part of the book has to break with the amusing detail of colleges, and handle the muddled nature of the man under the don. The writer here seems sometimes inadequate, out of her depth, not so much for realization as for rendering. The book would be indeed accomplished could she have put into this end of it an intensity that would stir the reader's private questioning about mind and body, making a fringe for every sentence. But although the writing may seem a little thin, perhaps, if one reads helpfully, it is all there for one's need. At any rate, Miss Freeman has given a theme that starts one hoping for more—variations, amplifications, new compositions.

E. B.

Kiddush Ha-Shem, by Sholom Ash. Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America. $2.

KIDDUSH HA-SHEM (Prayer Song) is a fervent narrative vindication of the Jewish point of view—its historical basis being the anti-Hebrew activity of the Cossacks and the Tatars during the particular year, 1648. The book is written from the impassioned race attitude that is, under ordinary circumstances, to be deplored since it disposes of a properly open-minded perspective. But Kiddush Ha-Shem is far more than the exposition of a religious grievance. It is, in the first place, surpassingly beautiful both in tone and expression. It inspires an almost dizzying sense of the color of life in the seventeenth century Ukraine. And that color existed, one feels, largely because with the Hebrews it was a case of finding what they were looking for. The book is probably most of all valuable, however, in its interpretation of Judaism. For, in spite of an inclination to romantic fancy rather than to criticism, it gets at the essential emotional sincerity of the religion. And, of course, the inspirational effect of the religion was without end, for, when trouble came, the Jews could forget everything and go happily to death, singing the Kiddush Ha-Shem.

M. E. J.

Mitya's Love, by Ivan Bunin. Translated from the French by Madelaine Boyd. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.

THIS is a Russian spring song, simple, wistful and tender in its beginning, ruder in its pastoral phase which develops with fatal velocity to the final sharp discord. The crack of Mitya's revolver breaks off the hurrying, mounting dissonances and ends the piece with shocking abruptness. In the form of the French "nouvelle" this little gem combines exquisitely-cut symmetry with flawless depth of substance. Madelaine Boyd is to be congratulated on the care which has prevented any appreciable dimming of its lustre in translation.

D. B. W.

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